

THE PIVOT TOWARD ASIA: A BALANCED APPROACH

BY

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A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF
THE SCHOOL OF ADVANCED AIR AND SPACE STUDIES
FOR COMPLETION OF GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

SCHOOL OF ADVANCED AIR AND SPACE STUDIES
AIR UNIVERSITY
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA
JUNE 2013

Report Documentation Page			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
<p>Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.</p>				
1. REPORT DATE JUN 2013	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2013 to 00-00-2013		
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE The Pivot Toward Asia: A Balanced Approach		5a. CONTRACT NUMBER		
		5b. GRANT NUMBER		
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S)		5d. PROJECT NUMBER		
		5e. TASK NUMBER		
		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) School Of Advanced Air And Space Studies,,Air University,,Maxwell Air Force,AL		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)		
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)		
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited				
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES				
14. ABSTRACT The announcement of the U.S. strategic rebalancing toward Asia from the Middle East creates the potential for significant miscalculation. Faced with a new operational environment and different threats than those of the past decade, the Department of Defense (DOD) must develop a defense strategy capable of maintaining long-term security and stability in the Asia-Pacific while protecting U.S. interests in the region. This transition, compounded by the impact of sequestration and the national debt crisis, makes developing an efficient and effective defense strategy a significant undertaking. This thesis contends that a future defense strategy must combine Joint-AirSea Operations (J-ASO) and Security Cooperation (SC) to provide a balanced approach for protecting US national security interests in Asia.				
15. SUBJECT TERMS				
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 89
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified		
19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON				

APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this thesis meets master's-level standards of research, argumentation, and expression.

STEPHEN E. WRIGHT 31 May 2013

HAROLD R. WINTON 31 May 2013

DISCLAIMER

The conclusions and opinions expressed in this document are those of the author. They do not reflect the official position of the US Government, Department of Defense, the United States Air Force, or Air University.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge several people beginning with my wife and daughter. Thank you for your complete and never-ending support. Thanks to my parents for developing my drive to inquire. Huge thanks to Dr. Wright for mentoring me throughout the year. Your sage guidance provided me the tools to complete this demanding school, for that I will always reflect fondly upon our discussions. Finally, thanks to the faculty and staff of SAASS for developing my ability to think about the world and the complex problems of our times in broad terms and myriad ways.

ABSTRACT

The announcement of the U.S. strategic rebalancing toward Asia from the Middle East creates the potential for significant miscalculation. Faced with a new operational environment and different threats than those of the past decade, the Department of Defense (DOD) must develop a defense strategy capable of maintaining long-term security and stability in the Asia-Pacific while protecting U.S. interests in the region. This transition, compounded by the impact of sequestration and the national debt crisis, makes developing an efficient and effective defense strategy a significant undertaking. This thesis contends that a future defense strategy must combine Joint-AirSea Operations (J-ASO) and Security Cooperation (SC) to provide a balanced approach for protecting US national security interests in Asia.

Joint-AirSea Operations require additional constructs for air-sea integrated operations, beyond the current air-sea battle concept in development by DOD. For this reason, this study applies Joint AirSea Operations as the broader term encompassing AirSea Battle.

The methodology consists of two case studies, each examining six factors: the threat, the type of conflict, the scale, the cost, the overall effectiveness of the operation, and the overall efficiency of the operation. This research paper examines two historical case studies of past U.S. military conflicts. The first study examines the Pacific Theater in World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the 1991 Gulf War. The second case study examines the War in Afghanistan, the Iraq War, and Plan Colombia. The historical context from these conflicts provides the framework with which to evaluate why J-ASO and SC provide the balanced defense strategy required in the Asia-Pacific.

By developing J-ASO, the DOD advances the integration of the air and maritime components similar to the post-Vietnam integration of the air and land components. J-ASO provides the operational concept capable of gaining and maintaining access and freedom of maneuver in an anti-access/area-denial (A2AD) contested region. By increasing SC operations, the DOD builds the capacity of at-risk nations to improve their security. J-ASO and SC provide the core for any balanced defense strategy for the pivot toward Asia.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles, you will never be in peril. When you are ignorant of the enemy but know yourself, your chances of winning or losing are equal. If ignorant both of your enemy and of yourself, you are certain in every battle to be in peril.

—Sun Tzu

After a decade of continuous combat, the United States begins a transition from major combat operations to what one hopes will be a more long-term sustainable and affordable defense strategy. The U.S. has a consistent history of reducing its armed forces after a major conflict. For example, it did so after World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the 1991 Gulf War. The U.S. will also do so after Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. During each reduction, considerations on current and emerging threats to national security produce a shift in strategy and influence the decisions on military force structure and capabilities. While the occurrence of the current transition is no different from previous transitions, the factors influencing this transition are particular to the contemporary environment.

On 11 September 2001, the United States as the unipolar global power entered into a global war on terrorism. Twelve years on, the world is far different. Today, the external challenges to U.S. national security are more complex than ever. The U.S. faces a multi-polar world with a potentially resurging Russia and a rising China both challenging the current international balance of power. China is developing a modern military, forming a blue-water naval force by investing in aircraft carriers and influencing

regional interests by developing anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) capabilities.¹ In addition, North Korea's successful underground nuclear test, combined with a demonstrated inter-continental ballistic missile capability, further complicates U.S. interests across Asia.² Meanwhile, in the Middle East, the Arab Spring offers an opportunity to spread democratic reforms; however, this movement also has the potential to threaten U.S. strategic considerations throughout the region.³ Iran continues its efforts to enrich uranium; develop anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) capabilities to challenge access to the Arabian Gulf; oppose U.S. interests in the region; and threaten U.S. allies, particularly Israel. While the struggle to fight al-Qaeda and other extremist organizations continues in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the fight against such groups has spread across the Arabian Peninsula and the African Maghreb. Meanwhile in the western hemisphere, drug trafficking and illegal immigration continue threatening U.S. interests at home.⁴ Together, nuclear proliferation, multi-polar balance of power shifts, terrorism, and trans-national criminal organizations create significant challenges to U.S. national security interests for the near future. These challenges, combined with domestic challenges, compound the difficulty of a transitioning from wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to a defense strategy for the next decade.

¹ Peter Apps, "Global Naval Balance of Power Shifting with Introduction of China's Aircraft Carrier," *National Post* (Washington: November 28, 2012), <http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/11/28/global-naval-balance-of-power-shifting-with-introduction-of-chinas-aircraft-carrier>.

² Kevin Voigt, "How Close Is North Korea to a Nuclear Missile?" (Atlanta, GA: February 12, 2013), <http://www.cnn.com/2013/01/30/world/asia/north-korea-nuclear-missile>.

³ Allen Keiswetter, "The Arab Spring: Implications for US Policy and Interests" *Middle East Institute* (Washington D.C.: January 13, 2013), <http://www.mei.edu/content/arab-spring-implications-us-policy-and-interests>.

⁴ Chairwoman Illeana Ros-Lehtinen, *Emerging Threats and Security in the Western Hemisphere: Next Steps For U.S. Policy* (Washington D.C.: 13 October 2011), <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-112hrg70665/pdf/CHRG-112hrg70665.pdf>.

The U.S. national debt also complicates the development of a national security strategy to mitigate effectively these challenges. The current debt challenges and the budget cuts associated with sequestration constrain options for meeting future national-security challenges.⁵ The costs of fighting two wars over the past decade have contributed to the debt crisis.⁶ As combat operations conclude in Afghanistan and military budgets constrict, the Department of Defense (DOD) must develop more capabilities at lower costs. This conundrum poses a dilemma to decision makers contemplating the military's future force structure and capabilities. While budget constraints challenge the transition, war weariness, both internal and external to the U.S., also affect it.

The U.S. and many of its allies are war weary. Twelve years of intense counterinsurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have strained the American public's support for and our allies' contributions to both conflicts. This weariness contributed to ending the U.S. occupation of Iraq in 2011.⁷ Additionally, twelve years after NATO led the ISAF mission into Afghanistan, war weariness among U.S. allies continues to drive discussions regarding the withdrawal of combat forces by 2014.⁸ In the aftermath of both wars, the U.S. may find few allies willing to commit to another conflict and little support from the U.S. public to commit combat forces for the long term.

⁵ Donna Miles, "Locklear: Budget Uncertainty Threatens Asia-Pacific Rebalance" *American Forces Press Service*, (Washington D.C.: March 5, 2013), <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=119447>.

⁶ Amy Belasco, "The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11" Congressional Research Service (Washington D.C.: March 29, 2011), <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL33110.pdf>.

⁷ Bob Secter, "Survey Paints Picture of War-weary America," *Chicago Tribune News* (Chicago, IL, October 16, 2012), http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-10-16/news/ct-nw-global-attitudes-poll-20121016_1_survey-paints-picture-foreign-policy-military-action .

⁸ Carsten Volkery, "Afghanistan Conference: War-Weary NATO Members Look for Morale Boost," *Spiegel International* (London, UK: January 29, 2010), <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/afghanistan-conference-war-weary-nato-members-look-for-morale-boost-a-674723.html>.

In his farewell address to NATO, Defense Secretary Gates intimated that future conflicts might see less commitment from U.S. forces and require greater commitments from other NATO nations.⁹ Although the U.S. provided the lion's share of forces in both Iraq and Afghanistan, allies and partner nations made significant contributions. In short, the war weariness of both the U.S. and our allies will probably influence U.S. defense strategy into the next decade.

With the combination of current and emerging challenges to U.S. national security, a shrinking defense budget, the accumulated debt of two extended wars, and U.S. and coalition partners war weariness, how can the Department of Defense transition the U.S. military into an affordable and balanced force structure capable of defending U.S. national security interests in the next decade? These constraints and myriad threats require developing a force capable of deterring and, as required, rapidly deploying to counter threats to U.S. strategic interests abroad. The 2010 National Security Strategy recognizes the requirement for this transition and the need to innovate in order to secure U.S. interests in the future.¹⁰ It provides a starting point but it is not the only guide to future security planning.

The 2012 Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense, elaborates upon the NSS guidance. Former Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta wrote, "Going forward, we will also remember the lessons of history and avoid repeating the mistakes of the past when our military was left ill-prepared for the future. As we end

³ Robert Gates, Secretary of Defense, "The Security and Defense Agenda: The Future of NATO," (NATO Headquarters, Belgium: June 10, 2011),

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/57526818/Secretary-Gates-Address-About-NATO>.

¹⁰ Barak Obama, *National Security Strategy*, (Washington DC, May 2010),

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf.

today's wars and reshape our Armed Forces, we will ensure that our military is agile, flexible, and ready for the full range of contingencies.”¹¹

The requirement for readiness across the “full range of contingencies” generated a number of primary missions for the U.S. armed forces. The DOD described several of these primary missions as follows: continued capabilities to counter terrorism and irregular warfare, deter and defeat aggression, counter weapons of mass destruction and provide an effective nuclear deterrent, and operate effectively in space and cyberspace.¹² The DOD also guidance included two additional primary missions.

The first mission requires investing in an operational capacity to operate effectively in an A2/AD environment. On 9 November 2011, the DOD announced the creation of the Air-Sea Battle Office (ASBO) to develop an air and maritime battle concept, herein referred to as a part of Joint-AirSea Operations (J-ASO), to “counter emerging A2/AD threats.”¹³ This air and maritime battle concept requires development of AirSea Battle and other joint air and sea operations. J-ASO encompasses both peacetime and combat air and maritime component operations as an integrated construct. For this reason, this study uses the term Joint-AirSea Operations (J-ASO) as the term encompassing AirSea Battle, the current recognized term by the DOD, and broader maritime operations.

The second mission requires the continued capability to conduct stability and counterinsurgency operations, humanitarian, disaster relief, and other operations, herein

¹¹ Leon Panetta, “Defense Strategic Guidance,” The Department of Defense, (Washington DC: 5 January 2012), 4, <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1643>.

¹² Leon Panetta, “Defense Strategic Guidance,” The Department of Defense, (Washington DC: 5 January 2012), 5, <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1643>.

¹³ Defense Department, “Multi-service Office to Advance Air-Sea Battle Concept,” Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense Public Affairs, (Washington DC, November 9, 2011), <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123279411>.

referred to as Security Cooperation (SC). These SC operations “emphasize non-military means and ends and military-to-military cooperation to address instability and reduce the demand for significant U.S. force commitments to stability operations.”¹⁴ Secretary Panetta emphasized shifting away from “providing large-scale, prolonged stability operations.”¹⁵

These final two primary missions, J-ASO and SC, generated the present research question. This thesis asks what military missions are required in order to provide a balanced defense posture for the pivot toward Asia? This thesis contends that a future defense strategy must combine J-ASO and SC in order to provide the most well-balanced approach for protecting US national security interests in Asia. While J-ASO and SC appear to be much different, when linked, they provide the complementary elements of a balanced defense strategy for the Asia-Pacific region.¹⁶

This thesis uses a comparative historical analysis, encompassing two case studies. Both case studies examine six elements: the threat, the type of conflict, the scale of U.S. military commitment in the conflict, the cost of the conflict, the overall effectiveness of military operations, and the overall efficiency of the military operation.

The application of these two case studies to the U.S. pivot toward Asia provides framework with which to determine why J-ASO and SC provide the most well-balanced defense strategy in the Asia-Pacific. The first case study examines U.S. MCO conflicts since World War II. In assessing the A2/AD threat and the J-ASO concept to counter it,

¹⁴ Leon Panetta, “Defense Strategic Guidance,” The Department of Defense, (Washington DC: 5 January 2012), 6, <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1643>.

¹⁵ Leon Panetta, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities For 21st Century Defense*, Department of Defense, (Washington DC: January 2012), 6, http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense_Strategic_Guidance.pdf.

¹⁶ Phillip Walker, “Defense Strategy for the Next Decade: Joint Security Cooperation and AirSea Battle Operations” (Marine Corps University, May 2012). This thesis expands on an idea I initially considered at Marine Corps Command and Staff College linking AirSea Battle with Security Cooperation.

the first case study informs the discussion on whether the U.S. military maintains the capabilities to project power in an A2/AD environment or whether the threat environment requires the development of the J-ASO operational concept.

The second case study examines U.S. counterinsurgency (COIN) and SC operations. This case study examines whether COIN or SC is more effective and efficient at achieving improved security and stability. This comparative analysis considers whether an increase in Security Cooperation (SC) efforts in the Asia-Pacific provide a cost-effective option to major deployments and combat operations.

Chapter Two examines the drivers of U.S. national security strategy as they relate to the pivot toward the Pacific. It chapter divides threats to American interests into two categories, direct and indirect. Beginning with the direct military threat section, this analysis outlines the current and emerging A2/AD threat. Next, it outlines indirect threats. Then, it examines how the potential exists for a future adversary to transition from a strategy of direct threat to one of indirect threat. The purpose of this analysis is to outline the potential risks to U.S. interests in the Pacific over the next decade and to provide the context for analyzing the two case studies.

Chapter Three examines U.S. MCO conflicts from the Pacific Theater in World War II to the 1991 Gulf War. This comparative analysis focuses on the type of conflict, major combat operations (MCO) or long-term insurgencies, the overall cost in capital and casualties, the time duration, whether the military operations achieved desired political objective, and the resulting post-conflict military capabilities services retained. The chapter highlights trends in U.S. combat operations since WWII, identifying the type of conflict the U.S. rarely seen by the U.S. in the past 70 years. The analytical framework

illustrates the cumulative effect of defense capabilities. This analysis leads to the requirement to develop J-ASO capabilities based on current and emerging threats.

Chapter Three provides the background with which to identify potential gaps in U.S. capabilities in the pivot toward the Pacific.

Chapter Four compares the costs of a decade of SC in South America with the costs of MCO-COIN in Iraq and Afghanistan. This comparative case study illustrates the very large cost differential between the SC and MCO COIN strategies. The findings provide insight into whether SC can be effective and efficient in achieving positive outcomes for enhancing long-term U.S. national security interests. This analysis contributes to DOD considerations in managing security and stability challenges in Asia. After the two case studies, this paper applies the conclusions of each to the U.S. pivot toward Asia.

Chapter Five proposes a balanced defense strategy for the pivot toward the Pacific by examining the capabilities required to deter threats to U.S. security interests in Asia. It also assesses the risks associated with failing to develop such a balanced strategy. In addition, it examines why the development of J-ASO and increasing SC operations are both required to provide a balanced, efficient, and effective way to counter current and emerging security threats to U.S. interests in the Pacific. The assessment then examines the risks and pitfalls of developing an unbalanced strategy. In doing so, it demonstrates both the problem of developing J-ASO without SC, and the problem of developing SC without J-ASO.

Chapter Six answers the research question, thus validating the thesis. It also offers several implications of this answer.

History provides the foundation for assessing the linkages between the past, the present, and the future. Before leaving office, Secretary Gates warned that those considering another land war in Asia should “get their heads examined.”¹⁷ The conflicts of the last twelve years, indeed the conflicts since World War II provide lessons that amplify Secretary Gates’ warning. This thesis demonstrates how to heed that warning.

¹⁷ Robert Gates, “Secretary of Defense Address to West Point,” (West Point, NY: February 25, 2011), <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1539>.

CHAPTER 2

THE PIVOT TOWARD ASIA IN CONTEXT

From the military redeployments from Iraq and Afghanistan to the President's announcement of a strategic pivot toward Asia, significant assessments and guidance are driving changes to U.S. national security strategy and to the transition from the current defense strategy to a strategy for the next decade. This chapter builds the foundation for determining the critical elements for an effective, efficient balanced defense strategy for the next decade. Examining the global economic shift to Asia provides context for understanding the strategic policy shift made by the U.S. Understanding the effects of the national debt and sequestration provides context about anticipated future budget constraints that will influence defense priorities and capabilities. Finally, identifying potential threats the U.S. faces in the pivot toward Asia builds further context for understanding future U.S. defense strategy requirements.

In November of 2011, the President announced a new East Asia policy.¹ A year later, in a press conference at the White House, Assistant Press Secretary, Ben Rhodes, with the National Security Council's Senior Director for Asia, described East Asia as an important economic, political, and security region.² The World Bank assesses that East Asia and the Pacific account for nearly 40 percent of global economic growth in 2012

¹ Jackie Calmes, "A U.S. Marine Base for Australia Irritates China," *The New York Times* (Canberra, Australia, November 16, 2011), http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/17/world/asia/obama-and-gillard-expand-us-australia-military-ties.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

² Ben Rhodes, "On-the-Record Conference Call on the President's Upcoming Trip to Asia," November 15, 2012, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/11/15/record-conference-call-presidents-upcoming-trip-asia>.

and does so in 2013.³ The significant economic growth in East Asia brings with it competition for access to these growing markets.

The strategic importance of East Asia centers on the economic relationships and markets in the region. The U.S. remains the world's largest economy, totaling nearly \$3.9 trillion in annual trade, but China continues to close the gap as the world's second-largest economy totaling nearly \$3.7 trillion in annual trade.⁴ In 2011, the U.S. Department of Commerce reported U.S. imports of nearly \$400 billion in goods from China and exports of over \$100 billion to China.⁵ China ranked behind Canada as the second-largest trading partner with the U.S.⁶ China is the top overall importer to the U.S. and is third behind Canada and Mexico for U.S exports.⁷ Today, the economic interdependency between the U.S. and China brings stability to the Asian Pacific region; however, this relationship may not always be friendly.

The growth in the other Asia-Pacific region nations brings the world's largest two economies into competition for access to these growing markets. The other nations in the region are critical to both the U.S. and China economies. India, Japan, Russia, South Korea, Indonesia, Australia, Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines all rank in the top 36 countries in the world for gross domestic product, measured in totals of

³ *East Asia and Pacific Economic Update, December 2012 – Remaining Resilient*, The World Bank, December 19, 2012, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2012/12/19/east-asia-and-pacific-economic-update-december-2012-remaining-resilient>.

⁴ U.S. Department of Commerce 2011 Trade Data, <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/statistics/highlights/top/top1112yr.html>.

⁵ U.S. Department of Commerce 2011 Trade Data, <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/statistics/highlights/top/top1112yr.html>.

⁶ *US-China Trade Statistics and China's World Trade Statistics*, The US-China Business Council, <https://www.uschina.org/statistics/tradetable.html>.

⁷ U.S. Department of Commerce 2011 Trade Data, <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/statistics/highlights/top/top1112yr.html>.

purchasing-power parity.⁸ In addition, Cambodia, Laos, Papua Guinea, Timor-Leste, and Bhutan expect 5-10% growth through 2017.⁹ These statistics indicate the massive economic strength of the Asia-Pacific Region. With U.S. economic growth forecast at 2.5% for 2013, the U.S. will look for access to the rapidly growing markets in Asia.¹⁰ Similarly, in order to maintain a 9% annual growth rate, China will look to increase its access to the growing Asian markets.¹¹ As the nations in the Asia-Pacific Region continue to grow, China and the U.S. will inevitably compete for access.¹²

Entry to these countries translates to accessing their markets and ports from the global commons. Continued freedom of access is a driving factor behind the U.S. pivot toward Asia. As the U.S. looks to maintain its economic access to the Asia-Pacific Region, it must address the developing security challenges in the region. As America's security interests in the Asia-Pacific gain in importance, existing fiscal challenges will constrain its options for managing threats to those interests.

The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have cost approximately \$1.4 trillion, appropriated through 2012.¹³ Since 2001, baseline defense spending increased from \$287

⁸ CIA World Factbook 2013-14, (Washington D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, 2013), <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2001rank.html>.

⁹ Lucas Kawa, "The 20 Fastest Growing Economies In The World," *Business Insider* (October 24, 2012), <http://www.businessinsider.com/worlds-fastest-economies-2012-10?op=1>.

¹⁰ http://articles.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/2013-03-21/news/37903502_1_unemployment-rate-lower-unemployment-interest-rates

¹¹ East Asia and Pacific Economic Update, December 2012 – Remaining Resilient (The World Bank, December 19, 2012), <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2012/12/19/east-asia-and-pacific-economic-update-december-2012-remaining-resilient>.

¹² Hung Ming-Te, and Tony Tai-Ting Liu, "Sino-U.S. Strategic Competition in Southeast Asia: China's Rise and U.S. Foreign Policy Transformation Since 9/11," *Political Perspectives* volume 5 (2011), 96–119, http://www.academia.edu/1063550/Sino-U.S._Strategic_Competition_in_Southeast_Asia_Chinas_Rise_and_U.S._Foreign_Policy_Transformation_since_9_11.

¹³ Congressional Budget Office webpage analysis of spending for Afghanistan and Iraq wars, <http://www.cbo.gov/topics/national-security/iraq-and-afghanistan>.

billion to \$530 billion in 2012.¹⁴ Defense spending now absorbs over 20 percent of the federal budget.¹⁵ In November 2010, the then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, speaking at a meeting of the Harvard Institute of Politics, stated the number one national security threat to the U.S. was the national debt. As U.S. troops redeploy from the Middle East, the rise in military spending seen since 9/11 is ending.¹⁶ The costs of long-term MCO-COIN wars proved to be unsustainable. Examining historical post-war defense spending may help illuminate future spending levels.

Historically, the U.S. maintains a record of post-war defense budget reductions. After World War II, spending reductions drove an annual defense budget of \$200 billion (in 2013 dollars) from 1946-1950.¹⁷ By 1952, the budget soared to nearly \$650 billion. By 1955, however, the budget dropped 43 percent.¹⁸ During the Vietnam War, the same trend in spending occurred. A gradual increase in spending from \$400 billion per annum occurred in 1961 until a peak budget in 1967 of over \$550 billion.¹⁹ From 1967 until the war's end in 1972, the budget declined 33 percent.²⁰ In the 1980s, the government increased peacetime spending to nearly \$600 billion and after Gulf War 1991, spending

¹⁴ Brad Plummer, "America's Staggering Defense Budget, in Charts," *The Washington Post* (Washington D.C., January 7, 2013), <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/01/07/everything-chuck-hagel-needs-to-know-about-the-defense-budget-in-charts/>.

¹⁵ Brad Plummer, "America's Staggering Defense Budget, in Charts," *The Washington Post* (Washington D.C., January 7, 2013), <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/01/07/everything-chuck-hagel-needs-to-know-about-the-defense-budget-in-charts/>.

¹⁶ Malik Ahmad Jalal, "The Number One National Security Threat," *Harvard Law School National Security Journal* (March 28, 2011), <http://harvardnsj.org/2011/03/the-number-one-national-security-threat/>.

¹⁷ Clark A. Murdock, Kelley Sayler, and Ryan A. Crotty, *The Defense Budget's Double Whammy: Drawing Down While Hollowing Out from Within* (Washington D.C.: Center For Strategic and International Studies, October 18, 2012), http://csis.org/files/publication/121018_Murdock_DefenseBudget_Commentary.pdf.

¹⁸ Clark A. Murdock, Kelley Sayler, and Ryan A. Crotty, *The Defense Budget's Double Whammy: Drawing Down While Hollowing Out from Within* (Washington D.C.: Center For Strategic and International Studies, October 18, 2012), http://csis.org/files/publication/121018_Murdock_DefenseBudget_Commentary.pdf.

¹⁹ Clark A. Murdock, Kelley Sayler, and Ryan A. Crotty, *The Defense Budget's Double Whammy: Drawing Down While Hollowing Out from Within* (Washington D.C.: Center For Strategic and International Studies, October 18, 2012), http://csis.org/files/publication/121018_Murdock_DefenseBudget_Commentary.pdf.

²⁰ Clark A. Murdock, Kelley Sayler, and Ryan A. Crotty, *The Defense Budget's Double Whammy: Drawing Down While Hollowing Out from Within* (Washington D.C.: Center For Strategic and International Studies, October 18, 2012), http://csis.org/files/publication/121018_Murdock_DefenseBudget_Commentary.pdf.

fell by 36 percent.²¹ This trend of significant reductions in defense spending appears to continue with the end of the Iraq war and the drawdown of the war in Afghanistan. The overall defense budget for 2012, including baseline spending and overseas contingency operations spending, exceeded \$700 billion. As forces redeploy from Afghanistan, historical precedent suggest strongly that defense spending will decline. The 2013 defense budget submitted to Congress requested \$614 billion dollars, a reduction of \$86 billion from the previous year.²² This downward trend will almost certainly continue.

Efforts to shrink military spending will probably require deeper cuts due to the large annual deficits and the increasing national debt. Sequestration, or the Budget Control Act of 2011, directed reductions no both defense and domestic spending. The sequester concept dates back to the 1980s when President Reagan signed the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.²³ The current sequester required a 7.8 percent reduction in defense spending for fiscal year 2013. In real terms, this equates to \$500 billion of reductions in defense spending over the next 10 years, or \$50 billion in defense spending cuts for fiscal year 2013.

The Budget Control Act of 2011 forced the DOD to make immediate spending reductions. The impact on the DOD was immediate. The department instituted a furlough policy for all DOD civilian employees amounting to 11 days of unpaid leave through the end of the fiscal year.²⁴ In order to continue full support to forces deployed

²¹ Clark A. Murdock, Kelley Sayler, and Ryan A. Crotty, *The Defense Budget's Double Whammy: Drawing Down While Hollowing Out from Within* (Washington D.C.: Center For Strategic and International Studies, October 18, 2012), http://csis.org/files/publication/121018_Murdoch_DefenseBudget_Commentary.pdf.

²² Stephen Daggett and Pat Towell, *FY2013 Defense Budget Request: Overview and Context* (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, April 20, 2012), <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R42489.pdf>.

²³ William Hoagland et al., “Origins of the Sequester,” *Bipartisan Policy Center*, February 27, 2013, <http://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/2013/02/origins-sequester>.

²⁴ Karren Parrish, “DOD ‘Scrubbing Money Pot’ to Reduce Furloughs, Carter Says,” *American Forces Press Service* (April 17, 2013), <http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=119793>.

to Afghanistan without cuts, the services cut spending for training, procurement, research and development, test and evaluation, and health care.²⁵ On 19 April 2013, the service vice chiefs of staff testified to the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness that sequestration's immediate impact on overall readiness left the Defense Department unable to meet the current strategic guidance.²⁶ In a letter to Congress, then Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta stated the impact would lead to, "the smallest ground force since 1940, the smallest number of ships since 1915, and the smallest Air Force in its history."²⁷

This spending reduction came in addition to a previous spending cut of \$487 billion over ten years approved by Congress in 2012.²⁸ The combined impact of sequestration and the previous budget reduction amounted to cuts of nearly one trillion dollars over the next ten years or \$100 billion per year. The 2012 defense budget totaled nearly \$700 billion; the combined effects of the budget reduction and sequestration equate to a 14 percent overall reduction to defense spending over the next decade. The historical precedent of previous post-war drawdowns indicates the current reductions will continue until the defense budget decreases by about 30% of its current amount. These reductions complicate how the DOD will formulate a defense strategy supporting the pivot toward Asia.

²⁵ "Hagel Issues Memo Directing Preparations for Civilian Furloughs," *American Forces Press Service* (May 14, 2013), <http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=120034>.

²⁶ Nick Simeone, "Services: Sequestration Will Affect Force Readiness," *American Forces Press Service* (n.d.), <http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=119829>.

²⁷ Leon Panetta, "Letter to Senators John McCain and Lindsey Graham from Secretary of Defense," November 14, 2011, http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=9692f972-eb86-46da-bc8d-ff4d461e6c00.

²⁸ Cheryl Pellerin, "Comptroller: Sequestration Would Devastate Defense Spending," *American Forces Press Service* (September 20, 2012), <http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=117949>.

According to Tom Donilon, a national security adviser to the President, the strategic pivot toward Asia refocuses and rebalances U.S. power to resolve an imbalance of U.S. power projection in the Middle East.²⁹ As a part of this strategic rebalancing, the DOD must refocus its forces and capabilities. For twenty years, the DOD focused on land-centric desert operations in the Middle East; and now it must shift to the vast distances of the Pacific including, its green littorals, its archipelagoes, and the great land mass of East Asia. The budget reductions and the changes in operating environments affect how the U.S. will retool to meet the threats specific to Asia. In beginning to consider how to develop a balanced, effective, efficient defense strategy in Asia, an assessment of potential threats is necessary.

These potential threats to U.S. security in the Asia-Pacific Region can be divided into two main categories—those that are direct and those that are indirect. This thesis defines a direct threat as a military engaged in combat operations against another military in a direct, “hard-power” conflict. Indirect threats threaten regional stability by means other than regular military force, for example through terrorism and insurgency. As the U.S. shifts toward Asia, the competitive economic environment and other historical friction points, the Korean Peninsula, the South China Sea, Taiwan, and others provide the potential for competing interests to collide.³⁰ In the Asia-Pacific Region, China’s emergence as an economic power and the economic growth of the other Asia-Pacific nations increases economic competition. This increasing competition potentially threatens regional stability and security. The potential thus exists for conflict escalation.

²⁹ Amaami Lyle, “National Security Advisor Explains Asia-Pacific Pivot,” *American Forces Press Service* (March 12, 2013), <http://www.defense.gov/News/newsarticle.aspx?ID=119505>.

³⁰ Kurt M. Campbell, Nirav Patel, and Vikram J. Singh, *The Power of Balance: America in iAsia* (Center for a New American Security, June 2008), http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CampbellPatelSingh_iAsia_June08.pdf.

For example, both China and Japan claim sovereignty over a small island chain in the East China Sea, Senkakus or Diaoyu Islands.³¹ Recently, both China and Japan increased military presence around these islands.³² The U.S.-Japan Security Treaty includes this disputed island chain.³³ Any potential conflict between China and Japan over these islands may spur U.S. involvement and provide the catalyst for conflict escalation. The emergence of China as a global economic and increasing military power makes escalation a threat to U.S. interests in the region.

The development of new and increased Chinese military capabilities and associated shifts in Chinese defense policy influence the balance of power in the region. Since the end of World War II, the U.S. has maintained a significant presence in East Asia, protecting its interests and its allies. Now China, the other regional economic juggernaut, is increasing its military presence in the Asia-Pacific by building a modern military force capable of projecting power beyond its borders. China's interest in developing a military to defend its interests in the region is creating a shift in the balance of military power. This shift poses a potential direct threat to U.S. interests in the region. As a component of this military modernization aiming to shift the balance of power in the region, China is developing anti-access/area-denial (A2AD) capabilities.³⁴

A2AD capabilities pose a direct threat to the projection of U.S. military power. A2AD consists of an array of military weapons systems designed to prevent the freedom

³¹ Mark E. Manyin, *Senkaku (Diaoyu/Diaoyutai) Islands Dispute: U.S. Treaty Obligations* (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, January 22, 2013), 1-6, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R42761.pdf>.

³² Jane Perlez, "China Steps Up Pressure on Japan in Island Dispute," *The New York Times* (Beijing, China: December 15, 2012), http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/16/world/asia/china-steps-up-pressure-on-japan-in-island-dispute.html?_r=0.

³³ Mark E. Manyin, *Senkaku (Diaoyu/Diaoyutai) Islands Dispute: U.S. Treaty Obligations* (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, January 22, 2013), 1-6, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R42761.pdf>.

³⁴ *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2012* (Office of the Secretary Of Defense, May 2012), http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/2012_CMPR_Final.pdf.

of maneuver in a specific area. In the Asia-Pacific Region, A2AD can potentially help to deny freedom of navigation. These capabilities create a non-permissive environment that directly counters U.S. power projection. A2AD capabilities include the use of mines, fast boats, mini-subs, anti-aircraft surface-to-air missiles, and surface-to-surface cruise missiles in conjunction with other naval and air forces to deny access. Advanced technologies allow these systems to create a non-permissive environment hundreds of miles from shore.

In a message to the U.S. Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Greenert discussed the ramifications of the A2AD threat to protecting U.S. security interests. A2AD assets provide the capability to “close off international airspace or waterways.”³⁵ For U.S. forces, the A2AD direct threat may inhibit “being able or willing to pay the cost to reopen these areas or come to the aid of allies.”³⁶ The strategic implication of A2AD is that it “gives a country with A2AD capabilities leverage over their neighbors and reduces U.S. influence.”³⁷ This increased leverage directly threatens the ability of American armed forces to protect national interests and undermines U.S. influence in the region. The threat to freedom of maneuver that A2AD creates inhibits the furtherance of American economic opportunities in the region. While A2AD establishes a direct threat to U.S. interests in the Asia-Pacific, an indirect threat also exists.

³⁵ Admiral Jonathan W. Greenert, “Projecting Power, Assuring Access” military, *The Official Blog of Chief of Naval Operations*, May 10, 2012, <http://cno.navylive.dodlive.mil/2012/05/10/projecting-power-assuring-access>.

³⁶ Admiral Jonathan W. Greenert, “Projecting Power, Assuring Access” military, *The Official Blog of Chief of Naval Operations*, May 10, 2012, <http://cno.navylive.dodlive.mil/2012/05/10/projecting-power-assuring-access>.

³⁷ Admiral Jonathan W. Greenert, “Projecting Power, Assuring Access” military, *The Official Blog of Chief of Naval Operations*, May 10, 2012, <http://cno.navylive.dodlive.mil/2012/05/10/projecting-power-assuring-access>.

Asian military thought provides insight into the most probable indirect threat to U.S. interests in the Asia-Pacific. Sun Tzu's theory of war suggests that the greatest military strategy is to win a war without fighting it, to achieve the political objective without using the military in direct combat to achieve it.³⁸ Sun Tzu also counsels military leaders not statesmen to take the path of least resistance to achieve one's objective. During China's war of independence, Mao Zedong employed irregular warfare tactics to defeat his adversaries.³⁹ During the Vietnam War, Ho Chi Minh's Viet Cong employed irregular warfare tactics in their efforts to defeat French and American forces.⁴⁰ These tactics harkened back to the teachings of Sun Tzu and proved effective against both Japan and the Nationalist Chinese. These examples illustrate the propensity of Asian governments and forces to use the "indirect approach."⁴¹

One particular form of irregular warfare, insurgency, provides a methods to achieve significant ends with economic means. Mao led the people's revolution toppling Chiang Kai-shek's government. Ho Chi Minh led the ousting of two foreign powers and reunited a divided Vietnam. The combined success of the communist insurgencies in China and Vietnam proved major setbacks to U.S. strategic interests in Asia during the Cold War. Today, the indirect threat of insurgency remains a viable means of countering American interests in Asia.

An insurgent strategy produces destabilizing effects to achieve a political objective. In addition to challenging the ability of governments to secure their people, an insurgency can reduce the stability of economic markets in the region. As the U.S. looks

³⁸ Sun Tzu and Samuel B. Griffith, *The Illustrated Art of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

³⁹ Mao Tse-Tung, *On Protracted War* (China, 1938).

⁴⁰ General Nguyễn Giáp Võ, *People's War, People's Army* (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2001), 9-20.

⁴¹ Basil Henry Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2nd rev. ed (New York, N.Y., U.S.A: Meridian, 1991), 353-370.

to increase its access to the growing economic markets of East Asia, an insurgency that destabilizes the region's economic markets also threatens to negate the benefits of America's political and economic ties to the region. If an insurgency cripples a region or a particular market, the U.S. must decide whether to forgo the benefits of the region and its markets or support efforts to suppress the insurgent activities. Both the Soviet Union and China employed this indirect strategy of threatening U.S. interests in Asia, Africa, and South America throughout the Cold War.⁴² Such use of insurgencies as an indirect threat to American interests remains viable.

The combination of competing economies and military forces requires careful management. As China and the U.S. continue their economic growth, the U.S. increases its presence in Pacific, and China continues to modernize its military, the potential for conflict increases. For the U.S., the optimal solution within the Pacific requires maintaining a balance in the U.S.-Chinese economic competition, while also providing economic growth opportunities and security for the other nations in the region.⁴³ In order to determine the right course for U.S. defense strategy over the next decade, both the direct and indirect threats to U.S. interests in the Asia-Pacific require consideration. This chapter has described the global economic shift to Asia, the reduction in U.S. defense spending caused by post-war drawdowns and a burgeoning national debt, and emerging direct and indirect threats, all critical elements in developing a balanced defense strategy supporting the U.S. pivot toward Asia.

⁴² Steven Mez and Raymond Millen, "Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the 21st Century: Reconceptualizing Threat and Response" (Strategic Studies Institute, 2004), <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub586.pdf>.

⁴³ Jeffrey Bader et al., *Understanding the U.S. Pivot to Asia* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 2012), 13, http://www.brookings.edu/~media/events/2012/1/31%20us%20asia/20120131_pivot_asia.pdf.

Before further examination of what a balanced defense strategy might entail, this paper offers a two-part comparative analysis providing historical insights to the context outlined in this chapter. This comparative analysis provides insights into the capabilities the U.S. already retains and highlights the gaps in capabilities needing development. The next two chapters analyze past American wars as a means of developing a balanced defense strategy for Asia.

CHAPTER 3

PREPARING FOR MAJOR COMBAT OPERATIONS

The emerging direct and indirect threats in the Pacific, combined with the current domestic fiscal challenges present a complex strategic problem for the DOD. The department must develop a strategy capable of providing security and stability in the Asia-Pacific at a reasonable cost. This chapter's examination of past U.S. wars aids in understanding why Joint-AirSea Operations (J-ASO) and Security Cooperation (SC) are key elements in a cost efficient balanced defense strategy for the pivot toward Asia.

This chapter investigates past major combat operations (MCO) that posed a direct threat to the U.S. The insights gained from these past MCOs will illustrate why J-ASO is required to defend against the direct threat challenging U.S. access in the Pacific. This first case study informs the discussion on whether J-ASO provides the MCO capability required to counterA2AD direct threat. The examination begins with the Pacific Theater in World War II, continues into the Korean and the Vietnam Wars, and concludes with the 1991 Gulf War.

The variables considered in this analysis include the enemy threat; the MCO response; the efficiency of the operation, consisting of the scale, duration, cost, and casualties; and the overall effectiveness of the U.S. operation. Enemy threats are conventional, i.e. regular uniformed military personnel trained to conduct combat operations; and unconventional, i.e. a broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations conducted through, with, and by surrogate and indigenous forces.¹ The MCO responses are unlimited and limited, as well as conventional and unconventional, air-sea-

¹ "Joint Publication 1-02 Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms" (Department of Defense, January 31, 2011), 383, http://ra.defense.gov/documents/rtm/jp1_02.pdf.

land, and air-land. The scale derives from the number of U.S. forces involved in the operation. The duration expresses the length of the operation. The cost represents the overall amount spent funding the operation in fiscal year 2011 constant dollars. The casualties include military members either killed in action (KIA) or wounded in action (WIA). Effectiveness assesses the success or failure in achieving the overall political objective. At the end of this chapter, Table 1 provides a summary of the data from all four MCO conflicts examined.

Following their attack on Pearl Harbor, Japan's military forces launched a series of attacks against the French in Indochina, the British on the Malay Peninsula, the U.S. on the Philippine Islands, the Dutch East Indies, and New Guinea, as well as the Solomon, Caroline, Mariana, and Marshall Islands.² The U.S. responded with an unlimited, conventional air-land-sea campaign that ended the Japanese advance on Australia in the Battle of the Coral Sea. Japan countered against advancing U.S. and Allied forces with naval forces in the Pacific and Army forces entrenched on the islands of the South Pacific. The Japanese fought using a defensive strategy that attempted to deny access to critical geographic areas during the U.S. advance. In effect, Japan employed an anti-access area-denial (A2AD) strategy.³

In order to counter the Japanese A2AD strategy, the U.S. divided its MCO into two lines of operations. The U.S. campaign comprised an air-land-sea operation traversing the Southwest Pacific islands under the command of General MacArthur and a predominately air-sea operation across the Pacific Ocean under the command of Admiral

² Charles Messenger, *The Chronological Atlas of World War Two* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 74-85.

³ Vincent Alcazar, "Crisis Management and the Anti-Access/Area Denial Problem," *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, (Montgomery, AL: Air Force Research Institute, 2012), 48-49, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/ssq/2012/winter/alcazar.pdf>.

Chester Nimitz.⁴ While the U.S. attempted to execute cohesive joint operations in the Pacific, the relationships were often adversarial.⁵

The tenacity of the Japanese A2AD strategy in the Pacific and the relationships among the service components led to the U.S. paying a high price for victory, illustrated in figure 1. The five-year campaign in the Pacific mobilized millions of Americans, unleashing the costs and carnage indicative of an unlimited war. The Japanese A2/AD strategy punished US Naval forces at sea and inflicted heavy losses upon the US Army and Marine Corps in every contested island assault. The total cost of the war exceeded \$4 trillion.⁶ In the Pacific Theater, the U.S. lost some 4,533 aircraft, 10 aircraft carriers, 2 battleships, 66 cruisers and destroyers, and 49 submarines.⁷ The toll from operations in the Pacific on U.S. service members included 92,010 killed or missing and over 200,000 wounded in action, while Japan suffered over 1.3 million dead.⁸ At a significant cost in blood and treasure, the U.S. strategy in the Pacific Theater proved effective. The Japanese surrender ended World War II, resulting in the U.S. gaining a long-term position of strategic advantage in Asia.

The Pacific War provides a lesson to consider when assessing the current shift toward the Pacific. The complexities of operations against an A2AD threat in the Pacific required an integrated joint solution. In his post-war report to the Secretary of the Navy, Fleet Admiral King concluded joint operations were of the utmost importance in

⁴ Ernest King, U.S. Navy At War 1941-1945 Official Reports to the Secretary of the Navy, First Ed (Washington D.C.: United States Navy Department, 1946), 161.

⁵ Thomas E. Griffith, MacArthur's Airman: General George C. Kenney and the War in the Southwest Pacific (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas, 1998), 242.

⁶ Stephen Daggett, Costs of Major U.S. Wars (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, June 29, 2010), <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22926.pdf>.

⁷ John Ellis, The World War II Databook: The Essential Facts and Figures for All the Combatants (London: Aurum Press, 1993), 258-261.

⁸ John Ellis, The World War II Databook: The Essential Facts and Figures for All the Combatants (London: Aurum Press, 1993), 253-254.

achieving success in the Pacific.⁹ However, while the command structure worked, friction between General Douglas MacArthur and Admiral Chester Nimitz persisted throughout the war.¹⁰ Interservice rivalries caused tenuous relationships between Army Air Force and Navy leadership throughout the Pacific.¹¹ While successful, the challenges with the integrated joint solution of U.S. MCO in the Pacific Theater came at significant costs of blood and treasure.

The challenges of service integration reappear in Korea. With the surrender of Japan at the end of World War II, the occupation by the U.S. and Soviet Union ended Japanese control of the Korea and divided the peninsula at the 38th Parallel. The U.S. and Soviet Union division of the peninsula soon became a friction point between the two Korean sides. By 1950, the tensions erupted into conflict between North and South Korea, with the U.S. supporting the South and the Soviet Union and China supporting the North. Fearing escalation to a broader regional war with China or the Soviet Union, the Korean War ushered in the first limited conflict of the Cold War.

The initial combat operations pitted the conventional, direct threat of the North Koreans against a limited conventional U.S. strategy. North Korea conducted a conventional military campaign utilizing its Army and Air Force to attack across the 38th Parallel. The U.S. employed a limited conventional, air-land MCO campaign. The campaign included some integration of maritime operations into the air-land MCO campaign. The Navy focused on sea control to prevent escalation of the conflict on the peninsula to the rest of the region and supported the air-land campaign with carrier-based

⁹ Ernest King, U.S. Navy At War 1941-1945 Official Reports to the Secretary of the Navy, 1st ed. (Washington D.C.: United States Navy Department, 1946), 232.

¹⁰ Evan Thomas, *Sea of Thunder: Four Commanders and the Last Great Naval Campaign, 1941-1945* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006). 99-104.

¹¹ Thomas E. Griffith, Jr., MacArthur's Airman (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas, 1998), 242-243.

aircraft interdiction and naval gunfire from U.S. warships, along with the amphibious landing operations at Inchon.¹²

The air-land MCO effort proved disjointed, with the air and land components lacking effective coordination.¹³ The newly independent U.S. Air Force was conducting combat operations for the first time. The USAF concentrated on gaining air superiority and then on strategic bombing in a coercive strategy of punishment against North Korea.¹⁴ Meanwhile, the U.S. Army and Marine Corps fought major ground engagements with inadequate interdiction and close-air support.¹⁵ Even with the disjointedness in the air-land MCO execution, U.S.-led coalition forces pushed North Korean forces to the Yalu River, on the Chinese border.

The success of U.S.-led operations that forced the retreat of North Korean forces back above the 38th Parallel resulted in China's entry into the war with over 300,000 People's Liberation Army infantry. China's entry required an increase in tactical air support; however, limitations of assets, limited capability to coordinate close-air support; and the focus on strategic bombing all inhibited tactical air support for the land forces.¹⁶ This limitation in joint integration of airpower persisted between the Far East Air Force

¹² Edward J. Marolda, "The United States Navy and the Korean War," June 2009, <http://blog.usni.org/2009/06/25/the-united-states-navy-and-the-korean-war-by-edward-j-marolda>.

¹³ Conrad C. Crane, American Airpower Strategy in Korea, 1950-1953, Modern War Studies (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 15-22.

¹⁴ Robert Anthony Pape, Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 1996), 137-173.

¹⁵ Conrad C. Crane, American Airpower Strategy in Korea, 1950-1953, Modern War Studies (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 80-118. "The FEAF (Far East Air Forces) directive outlining the policies of the new "Air Attack Program" was published in the second week of July. It shaped three major factors. First priority for FEAF air action remained air superiority, followed by maximum selected destruction and then direct support to ground forces."

¹⁶Conrad C. Crane, American Airpower Strategy in Korea, 1950-1953, Modern War Studies (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 171-184.

and Naval Forces Far East.¹⁷ China's entry led to the eventual armistice between North and South Korea with the U.S. and China as co-guarantors, once again dividing the country along the 38th Parallel.

The combination of China's entry into the war, political limitation placed on the use of American airpower, and the joint integration challenges between the air, land, and sea components led the U.S. to pay a significant price in Korea. The three-year limited conventional MCO war mobilized nearly two million Americans and cost \$341 billion to fight.¹⁸ The Chinese counter-offensive inflicted significant losses upon the US Army and Marine Corps units fighting in Korea. The toll on U.S. service members included 33,739 killed and over 103,284 wounded in action.¹⁹ Estimates assess North Korea and China suffered over 616,000 dead. At a significant cost in blood and treasure, the U.S. limited conventional MCO campaign led to the accomplishment of the minimal and original political objective, restoring South Korean territorial integrity.

While the military operations conducted during the three-year Korean War resulted in the mutual armistice that re-established the border at the 38th Parallel, the war was not efficiently conducted. The inability to integrate air, land, and sea forces led to an emphasis on strategic bombing over interdiction and close-air support. The lack of coordinated interdiction and close-air support from Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps air assets exposed land forces to more significant lethality at the hands of the North

¹⁷ James A. Field, Jr., *History of United States Naval Operations in Korea* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1962), 385.

¹⁸ Stephen Daggett, *Costs of Major U.S. Wars* (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, June 29, 2010), <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22926.pdf>.

¹⁹ Department of Defense, "Principal Wars in Which the United States Participated- U.S. Military Personnel Serving and Casualties," May 2013, https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/pages/report_principal_wars.xhtml.

Korean and Chinese land forces than they would have otherwise experienced. In short, poorly coordinated air support to land forces increased U.S. casualties.

The Korean War provides several lessons to consider. First, the air-land operations experienced friction in the joint coordination between air, land, and sea components. This friction, first seen between component leadership in the Pacific Theater during World War II, persisted in Korea. The newly independent USAF failed to reduce this friction in the Korean War. Next, the application of airpower in targeting of strategic targets left land forces exposed to North Korean armed forces. While the strategic targeting provided some positive effects, the wrong doctrine, equipment, training, and the lack of greater integration in Korea increased the cost in blood and treasure.²⁰ The recognition of poor joint service coordination and integration in the Pacific Theater of World War II and again in Korea demonstrated a trend that reappeared again in Vietnam.

Fearful of the continuing spread of communism, the U.S. began military support to the Republic of Vietnam in 1955 following the withdrawal of French forces after their defeat at Dien Bien Phu. The French withdrawal precipitated the creation of a Communist North Vietnam and a pro-western South Vietnam. After failed elections to reunite the country, North Vietnam began an insurgency to topple the government of South Vietnam. Fearing the fall of another pro-western nation to communism, the U.S. countered by deploying military advisors to support the South Vietnamese Army's fight. A slow escalation ensued with increasing numbers of U.S. military advisor deployments.

²⁰ Conrad C. Crane, *American Airpower Strategy in Korea, 1950-1953*, Modern War Studies (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 171-184.

In 1965, U.S. forces began MCO in Vietnam against a combined enemy threat of conventional and unconventional forces. The fight consisted of an unconventional conflict fought by the insurgent Viet Cong guerilla fighters and a conventional conflict by the North Vietnam Army. The U.S. countered with a limited conventional air-land MCO campaign. Over the next ten years, the U.S. continued a policy of escalation, increasing the number of forces deployed to meet the continued advances of the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong.

Like Korea, the air-land MCO operations in Vietnam proved disjointed, with the air and land components lacking effective coordination and integration. Once again, the USAF concentrated on balancing the requirement to gain air superiority and strategic bombing with the requirement to provide interdiction and close air support for the Army and Marine Corps fighting against a tough adversary.²¹ Navy and Marine Corps aircraft also supported ground forces; however, each service fought to operate under its own doctrine.²² In particular, air support to the campaign operated from decentralized control and execution. The Navy and the USAF separated their air operations geographically, inevitably resulting in reduced support to the ground forces.²³ This inadequate integration of air, land, and sea forces affected the efficiency of this limited MCO war.

In Vietnam, the joint integration challenges between the air, land, and sea components contributed to the U.S. to paying a high price. The ten-year limited MCO

²¹ Ian Horwood, *Interservice Rivalry and Airpower in the Vietnam War*, 2nd ed. (Ft Leavenworth Kansas: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2009), 65-96.

²² Graham A. Cosmas, “General Westmoreland and Control of the Air War,” U.S. Army Center of Military History, July 11, 2003, <http://www.history.navy.mil/colloquia/cch4d.htm>.

²³ Benjamin S. Lambeth, “Combat Pair: The Evolution of Air Force-Navy Integration in Strike Warfare,” RAND, 2007, 5-6.

conflict mobilized over two and a half million Americans and cost \$738 billion to fight.²⁴

The combination of North Vietnamese Army conventional operations and Viet Cong unconventional insurgent operations inflicted significant casualties on the US Army and Marine Corps throughout South Vietnam. The toll on U.S. service members included 47,434 killed and over 153,303 wounded in action.²⁵ Not differentiating between civilian and combat deaths, the estimates of total North Vietnamese casualties vary widely, from 1.1 million killed as estimated by independent assessments, to 3.1 million as reported by the Vietnamese government, to 666,000 as reported by the DOD.²⁶ The long duration, high cost, and high casualties resulted in the inefficient execution of U.S. MCO in this conflict and ultimately proved the military ineffective at achieving success in Vietnam.

The eventual victory if the North Vietnamese over South Vietnam had multiple causes. These include the determination of the North Vietnamese Politburo to unify Vietnam under communist rule, the corruption and inefficiency of the South Vietnamese government, the eventual war-weariness of the American people, and the ineffective military strategy and force integration for countering the insurgency in the South and the North Vietnamese Army on the border with the North.²⁷ But, the inability to coordinate and integrate air, land, and sea forces was also a contributing factor.²⁸ The lack of coordinated interdiction and close-air support from Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps

²⁴ Stephen Daggett, Costs of Major U.S. Wars (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, June 29, 2010), <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22926.pdf>.

²⁵ Defense Casualty Analysis System, , *Principal Wars in Which the United States Participated- U.S. Military Personnel Serving and Casualties*, Department of Defense (Washington D.C.: May 2013), https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/pages/report_principal_wars.xhtml.

²⁶ Charles Hirschman, Samuel Preston, and Vu Manh Loi, “Vietnamese Casualties During the American War: A New Estimate,” in Population and Development Review, vol. Volume 21 (Population Council, 1995), 789-807, <http://faculty.washington.edu/charles/new%20PUBS/A77.pdf>.

²⁷ Thomas M. Huber and Randall N. Briggs, “Compound Warfare: That Fatal Knot” (Ft Leavenworth, Kansas, 2002), 221-265, http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/army/compound_warfare_cgsc.pdf.

²⁸ Ian Horwood, *Interservice Rivalry and Airpower in the Vietnam War* (Ft Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2009), 177-191.

air assets exposed land forces to greater lethality from the NVA and VC forces that they would have experienced otherwise. The overall failure to achieve joint integration by U.S. forces in Vietnam contributed to the high number of casualties resulting in the inefficient execution of MCO and partially to the ineffective military result—the fall of South Vietnam.

The Vietnam War provides several recurring lessons. First, the air-land operations lacked adequate joint coordination. The coordination between the air, land, and sea components failed to synchronize support to air-land operations. The lack of coordination and integration exposed forces to greater risk, decreasing the probability of operational success. The withdrawal from Vietnam and the eventual North Vietnamese victory in the South continued the trend of the U.S. forces failing to achieve the political objectives through military operational execution.

Desert One, the codename for a landing zone in Iran, was the catalyzing event that caused Congress to review the structure of the military and its ability to apply military force efficiently and effectively in order to achieve U.S. national security objectives.²⁹ The 1980 overthrow of the Shah of Iran led to the capture of 53 U.S. citizens.³⁰ American Special Forces attempted a mission to rescue these hostages from Iran but failed.³¹ The Holloway Report detailed the failings of Desert One and galvanized a call to action from Congress to correct the recurring problems with joint integration.³²

²⁹ James R. Locher, *Victory on the Potomac: The Goldwater-Nichols Act Unifies the Pentagon*, 1st ed, Texas A & M University Military History Series 79 (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2002), 33-58.

³⁰ Charles Cogan, “Desert One and Its Disorders,” *The Journal of Military History* 67 (January 2003), 201–216, http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_military_history/v067/67.1cogan.pdf.

³¹ Charles Cogan, “Desert One and Its Disorders,” *The Journal of Military History* 67 (January 2003), 201–216, http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_military_history/v067/67.1cogan.pdf.

³² Admiral J.L. Holloway, III, *Iran Hostage Rescue Mission Report* (Washington D.C.: Department of Defense, August 1980), <http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/holloway rpt.htm>.

The diminishing efficiency and effectiveness of the U.S. military from World War II to Desert One led to the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act a major transition in DOD, which increased joint service cooperation. The increased authority given to combatant commands streamlined the chain of command and unified the command authorities of fighting forces under a geographic combatant commander. This new unity of command included component commanders under the authority of the combatant commander that provided service expertise and the operational command authority of the forces assigned to the geographic command. The Component Commander's operational authorities divided the battlefield by domain—air, land, and maritime.³³ This helped to resolve the inter-service rivalry of competing service doctrines that contributed to the ineffective execution of MCO in Korea and Vietnam. Contributing to this greater integration of the air and land components was the Army's development of AirLand Battle.³⁴ The transformation and integration of force, precipitated by Goldwater-Nichols, between the end of Vietnam and the outbreak of conflict in the Middle East, noticeably improved the efficiency and effectiveness of MCO execution.

The 1990 invasion of Kuwait by Iraq set off a large international response led by the U.S. Over 584,000 U.S. and coalition forces conducted a limited conventional MCO air-land campaign plan against the fourth-largest armed force in the world to liberate Kuwait. The campaign began with a sustained employment of airpower lasting nearly 42 days. The air component quickly gained air superiority, enabling the precision targeting of entrenched Iraqi forces. At the same time, airpower applied pressure on Saddam

³³ American Defense Policy, 8th ed (Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 151-157.

³⁴ Harold R. Winton, "Partnership and Tension: The Army and Air Force Between Vietnam and Desert Shield," *Parameters* (Spring 1996),

<http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/parameters/Articles/96spring/winton.html>.

Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait through strategic bombing of key Iraqi government targets. The 42-day air operation against strategic and tactical targets set the conditions for initiating the ground operation. Supported by airpower, ground forces fought a mere 100 hours before Iraq agreed to end the war. U.S. casualties during this 42-day campaign totaled 144 service members killed and 438 wounded in action.³⁵ The relatively modest \$100 billion the U.S. spent liberating Kuwait exceeded all expectations in the level of effectiveness achieved by this limited conventional MCO air-land campaign.³⁶

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait became the proving ground for Goldwater-Nichols. The U.S. and its coalition decimated Iraqi forces in a matter of 42 days, proving to be the most efficient and effective large application of military force by the U.S. since World War II. While far from perfect, the combatant and component command structures stipulated by the Goldwater-Nichols Act led to greater coordination and integration than seen in either Korea or Vietnam. The post-Vietnam efforts between the Air Force and Army to institute AirLand improved coordination and integration in the 1991 Gulf War. The ability to accomplish this rapidly and with minimal casualties reflected the success of integrating air and land operations in a limited conventional air-land conflict. The catalyzing effect of Goldwater-Nichols distinctly enhanced military efficacy in the 1991 Gulf War.

The Gulf War provides several lessons for consideration. First, the coordination and integration of air-land operations proved efficient and effective. The coordination between the air, land, and sea components through the combatant command structure,

³⁵ Department of Defense, "Principal Wars in Which the United States Participated- U.S. Military Personnel Serving and Casualties," May 2013, https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/pages/report_principal_wars.xhtml.

³⁶ Stephen Daggett, Costs of Major U.S. Wars (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, June 29, 2010), <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22926.pdf>.

created by Goldwater-Nichols, synchronized operations and effects, reduced overall risk to forces, and increased the probability of operational success. The current coordination for executing MCO achieved the strategic objectives at little cost to the U.S. The withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait validated the reforms to the U.S. military. The military success of Gulf War 1991 followed a series of less successful military MCO campaigns in Korea and Vietnam. Looking forward to the pivot toward Asia, what historical insights do these MCO conflicts provide to inform the future?

Table 1. Major Combat Operations (MCO) Analysis

MCO Conflicts	Enemy Threat	Type of Conflict	Efficiency				Effectiveness
			Scale	Duration	Cost*	Casualties	
WW II Pacific Theater	Conventional (Army/Navy)	Unlimited Conventional (Air-Land-Sea)	16,112,566**	5 years	\$4.1 Trillion**	92,100 KIA 200,000 WIA	Japan Surrender
	Conventional (Army/Air Force)	Limited Conventional (Air-Land)	1,789,000	3 years	\$341 Billion	33,739 KIA 103,284 WIA	Mutual Armistice
Korea Vietnam	Conventional & Unconventional (Army/Air Force/ Guerilla)	Limited Unconventional (Air-Land)	2,594,000	10 years	\$738 Billion	47,434 KIA 153,303 WIA	U.S. Withdrawal
	Conventional (Army)	Limited Conventional (Air-Land)	584,342	42 days	\$102 Billion	144 KIA 438 WIA	Kuwait Liberated

Sources: Department of Defense, Defense Casualty Analysis System, (Washington D.C.: 2013), <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/dcasa>.
Stephen Daggett, *Costs of Major U.S. Wars* (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, June 29, 2010).

Note: * All cost converted to 2011 constant dollars
** Data encompasses both European and Pacific Theaters

This chapter analyzed four MCO conflicts from World War II to the 1991 Gulf War. Table 1 illustrates the consolidated data collected in this chapter. When examining the totality of MCO conflicts since World War II, several important points emerge.

After the Pacific Campaign in World War II, the preponderance of U.S. MCO conflicts focused on land-centric combat operations. The U.S. military expanded its capabilities to support warfare, fighting both unlimited and limited conflicts facing both conventional and unconventional threats. While the Pacific Theater in World War II required air-land-sea integration, the next three conflicts concentrated on air-land integration.

For over 70 years, the U.S. military remained focused on air-land integration. Initially, the U.S. struggled with air-land integration in Korea and Vietnam leading to failures in efficiency and effectiveness that resulted in higher cost and increased casualties. After the Goldwater-Nichols Act, air-land coordination and integration improved achieving unmatched effectiveness in the 1991 Gulf War.

With the exception of the 1991 Gulf War, MCO conflicts require significant commitment of national treasure at an extreme cost. MCO costs trillions of dollars to mobilize millions in order to engage in lengthy operations. The thousands of casualties and the inconsistent results of the past four U.S. MCO conflicts highlight the potential risks with engaging in future MCO. The 1991 Gulf War offers a potential optimistic lesson for consideration.

Looking to Asia, these considerations are pertinent to ensuring military success. The U.S. must consider the 70-year gap in air-sea operations and the lack coordination, integration, unity of command, and experience between the maritime and air components. A failure to prepare for the maritime environment of the Asia-Pacific increases the risk of a costly, inefficient and ineffective MCO response to the A2AD direct threat against U.S. interests in the region.

This chapter examined past MCO responses to direct threats challenging U.S. interests. The next chapter examines past U.S. operations against the indirect threat of insurgency.

CHAPTER 4

THE COST OF COUNTERINSURGENCY

The pivot toward the Pacific presents a complex set of challenges for the U.S. Chapter Three focused on providing insights for managing the direct threat in the Asia-Pacific by examining how the U.S. military managed previous direct threats. This chapter examines past U.S. military operations against the indirect threat of insurgency. The indirect threat in the Pacific presents a complex strategic problem for the Defense Department (DOD). The DOD must develop a strategy capable of providing security and stability in the Asia-Pacific region at a reasonable cost. The examination of past U.S. insurgency conflicts aids in understanding why Security Cooperation (SC) is a key element in a cost-efficient, balanced defense strategy for the pivot toward Asia.

This chapter's analysis compares past counterinsurgency operations (COIN) against insurgencies to derive insights leading to contribute to the development of a balanced Asia-pivot strategy. By implementing an indirect strategy, the adversary attempts to threaten security and stability within a nation. The goal of the insurgent is to either influence government policies or replace the government. The adversary, typically a group within a state or a transnational non-state organization, uses asymmetric tactics for political change.¹ COIN counters these efforts, while maintaining or reestablishing security and stability.

The two variations of COIN strategies include major combat operation counterinsurgency (MCO-COIN) and security cooperation counterinsurgency (SC-COIN). This chapter compares the effectiveness and efficiency of MCO-COIN and SC-

¹ James D. Kiras, "Irregular Warfare: Terrorism and Insurgency," in *Strategy in the Contemporary World: An Introduction to Strategic Studies*, Second Edition (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007), 188, http://indianstrategicknowledgeonline.com/web/baylis3e_ch09.pdf.

COIN in combating the indirect threat of insurgency. The difference between MCO-COIN and SC-COIN is the type and scale of involvement. In MCO-COIN, combat forces directly engage in operations against insurgent forces. In SC-COIN, non-combat advisory forces provide support to host-nation forces fighting the insurgency.

This paper asserts that MCO-COIN costs significantly more and provides less reliable security outcomes than SC-COIN. A series of metrics validates the assertion that SC-COIN is more effective and efficient than MCO-COIN. The variables this analysis considers include the enemy threat; the type of COIN response; the efficiency of the operation consisting of the scale, duration, cost, and casualties; and the overall effectiveness of the U.S. operation. These variables mirror the ones used in the previous chapter. The scale represents the number of U.S. forces involved in the operation. The duration expresses the length of the operation. The cost represents the overall dollars spent funding the operation in fiscal year 2011 constant dollars. The casualties include military members either killed in action (KIA) or wounded in action (WIA). Finally, effectiveness assesses the success or failure in achieving the overall political objective. At the end of this chapter, Table 2 provides a summary of the data from all three COIN operations examined.

Once again, a historical study of each type of COIN operation provides the context with which to assess the assertion. This chapter compares the MCO-COIN operations in Afghanistan and Iraq with the SC-COIN operations in Colombia. This chapter begins with the counterinsurgency in Afghanistan, continues with the counterinsurgency in Iraq, and concludes with the counterinsurgency in Colombia.

Following the 11 September 2001 attacks by al-Qaeda, the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan attempted to achieve several limited objectives. These include capturing or killing senior leaders of al-Qaeda, destroying al-Qaeda terrorist-training facilities, and striking those entities harboring al-Qaeda forces.² The Taliban regime, the government of Afghanistan, aligned with al-Qaeda and fought against the U.S. invasion. As a result, the U.S. entered an MCO fight against elements of al-Qaeda and the Taliban regime.

After the initial invasion and the success of toppling the Taliban regime, the war transitioned to an insurgency.³

In the absence of a central Afghan government, the U.S. transitioned to a long-term MCO-COIN strategy for combating both the Taliban insurgency and the al-Qaeda threat. The U.S. strategy for Afghanistan became “clear, hold, and build.”⁴ The initially limited objectives changed to encompass the more far-reaching goals of the occupation of Afghanistan, the destruction of al-Qaeda-linked terrorist networks, the removal of the remaining residual elements of the Taliban regime, the creation of a new central democratic government, and the development of an Afghan National Security Force (ANSF).⁵ The conflict escalated when the Taliban and several other terrorist and criminal organizations responded by employing an insurgent strategy throughout Afghanistan and the autonomously governed tribal regions of Pakistan.⁶ Accomplishing

² Philip Mudd, “Rethinking Objectives in Afghanistan,” *Foreign Policy* (November 17, 2010), http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/11/17/rethinking_objectives_in_afghanistan.

³ Joseph J. Collins, *Understanding the War in Afghanistan* (Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2011), 45-61, <http://www.ndu.edu/press/lib/pdf/books/understanding-war-in-afghan.pdf>.

⁴C. Christine Fair, Obama’s New “Af-Pak” Strategy: Can “Clear, Hold, Build, Transfer” Work? The Afghanistan Papers (Ontario, Canada: The Centre For International Governance Innovation, July 2010), 1, http://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/Afghanistan_Paper_6.pdf.

⁵ Seth G. Jones, U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan (Arlington, VA: RAND Corporation, April 2, 2009), 1-3, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/testimonies/2009/RAND_CT324.pdf.

⁶ Gilles Dorronsoro, “The Taliban’s Winning Strategy in Afghanistan” (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2009), 20-31, http://carnegieendowment.org/files/taliban_winning_strategy.pdf.

additional objectives proved difficult, and the insurgency challenged the effectiveness and efficiency of the MCO-COIN strategy.

The scale of U.S. operations in Afghanistan steadily increased from 2001 through 2012. From late 2001 through 2002, the U.S. deployed 5,200 military personnel to Afghanistan focused on the limited objectives of destroying terrorist training camps, capturing senior leaders of al-Qaeda, and eliminating terrorist safe havens in Afghanistan.⁷ Although bin Laden escaped from the Tora Bora region in late 2001, U.S. efforts against the Taliban, al-Qaeda, and their terrorist-training facilities proved successful.⁸

After the initial U.S. gains, the Taliban regrouped and developed a formidable insurgent strategy. The combination of bin Laden's escape from the Tora Bora region, the initiation of an insurgency by the Taliban, and the change in strategic objectives by the U.S. led to the continuous increase in the scale of operations in Afghanistan. This new insurgent strategy drove the U.S. to deploy more combat forces. Troop deployments continued a steady increase from 15,200 to 63,500 between 2004 and 2009.⁹ Still struggling to defeat the Taliban insurgency in 2010, the U.S. initiated a surge that increased U.S. forces in Afghanistan to over 100,000. By 2012, the surge ended with mixed results, leaving 63,500 U.S. service members to continue further MCO-COIN

⁷ Amy Belasco, The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11 (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, March 29, 2011), <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL33110.pdf>.

⁸ Committee on Foreign Relations, "Tora Bora Revisited: How We Failed to Get Bin Laden and Why It Matters Today," Report to the U.S. Senate, (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, November 30, 2009), 15-19, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CPRT-111SPRT53709/html/CPRT-111SPRT53709.htm>.

⁹Amy Belasco, The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11 (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, March 29, 2011), <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R40682.pdf>.

operations.¹⁰ In twelve years, over 500,000 U.S. service members deployed to support MCO-COIN operations in Afghanistan. The increase in “boots on the ground” and the increase in objectives led to an increase in cost.

The price of security and stability in Afghanistan cost the U.S. heavily in both treasure and blood. Over the past twelve years, the cost for Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) spending on Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) exceeds \$527 billion.¹¹ This spending total covers the combat operations in Afghanistan; however, this does not include the spending increases to the DOD baseline budget from \$300 billion in 2001 to over \$553 billion in 2012.¹² In addition, U.S. forces lost 2,193 service members fighting al-Qaeda and the Taliban.¹³ In addition, over 18,230 U.S. service members returned wounded from deployments to Afghanistan.¹⁴ These numbers do not address the number of coalition forces nor the number of Afghan security forces and civilians killed or wounded.

The overall success of twelve years of the MCO-COIN security and stability operations in Afghanistan, fighting al-Qaeda and the Taliban, is still in question. No longer in the lead role, the U.S. now supports the ANSF in its MCO-COIN operations. The longest war in U.S. history required tremendous resources and continues to strain the

¹⁰ Rod Nordland, “Troop ‘Surge’ in Afghanistan Ends with Mixed Results,” *New York Times* (Kabul, Afghanistan, September 21, 2012), <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/22/world/asia/us-troop-surge-in-afghanistan-ends.html?pagewanted=all&r=2&>.

¹¹ Anthony H. Cordesman, “The U.S. Cost of the Afghan War: FY 2002-FY2013” (Center for Strategic & International Studies, May 14, 2012), 4, http://csis.org/files/publication/120515_US_Spending_Afghan_War_SIGAR.pdf.

¹² Office of the Under Secretary of Defense Comptroller, United States Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Request (Washington D.C.: Department of Defense, February 2011), 1-3, http://comptroller.defense.gov/defbudget/fy2012/FY2012_Budget_Request_Overview_Book.pdf.

¹³ Hannah Fischer, U.S. Military Casualty Statistics: Operation New Dawn, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, February 5, 2013), 5, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22452.pdf>.

¹⁴ Hannah Fischer, U.S. Military Casualty Statistics: Operation New Dawn, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, February 5, 2013), 5, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22452.pdf>.

U.S. budget. The resulting debt will take years to pay in full. The long-term stability of the Afghan government and the ANSF remain tenuous. As the U.S. shifts from “clear, hold, and bold” to “clear, hold, build, and transition,” elements of al-Qaeda and the Taliban remain a threat to the security of Afghanistan.¹⁵

This transition to an Afghan-led operation represents a more sustainable long-term strategic relationship between the U.S. and Afghanistan; however, the efficacy of this MCO-COIN operation remains in question. The extended duration, the near trillion-dollar cost to improve security and stability in Afghanistan, and indecisive results indicate the war was inefficient and ineffective. As this transition continues, questions remain concerning the efficaciousness of this MCO-COIN operation.

Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) offers another MCO-COIN operation for examination. After the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq continued to challenge U.S. interests in the Middle East. On 19 March 2003, U.S. forces invaded Iraq to depose Saddam Hussein and his Ba’athist government. During the initial invasion, the U.S. faced a direct threat from Iraqi military forces. Using conventional MCO operations, U.S. led coalition forces captured Baghdad, toppled Saddam Hussein’s Ba’athist regime, and, began a transition to stability operations focused on returning Iraq to its citizens. After the initial invasion, however, an insurgency developed presenting an indirect threat to U.S. interests in Iraq. After failing to plan for stability operations and struggling to recognize the developing insurgency and prevent its destabilizing effects, the U.S. eventually countered with a MCO-COIN strategy. The nine years of MCO-COIN that followed the invasion of Iraq required a significant cost and commitment.

¹⁵ C. Christine Fair, Obama’s New “Af-Pak” Strategy: Can “Clear, Hold, Build, Transfer” Work?, The Afghanistan Papers (Ontario, Canada: The Centre For International Governance Innovation, July 2010), 1, http://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/Afghanistan_Paper_6.pdf.

After the initial invasion, the scale of U.S. operations in Iraq initially ebbed and then surged at the height of sectarian and insurgent violence. In March 2003, 100,000 service members deployed in the OIF invasion.¹⁶ By May, President George W. Bush announced the end of major combat operations in Iraq, and nearly 150,000 U.S. service members focused on beginning stability operations.¹⁷ A year later, nearly a third of U.S. forces redeployed from Iraq; however, an insurgency complicated by Sunni, Kurd, and Shia sectarian violence and the de-Ba'athification of the Iraqi government began challenging U.S. stability operations.¹⁸ The prolonged insurgency and the associated civil violence caused the U.S. to surge between 2007 and 2008 with force totals reaching a peak of 187,900 in November of 2007.¹⁹ For the next five years, the U.S. continued executing MCO-COIN operations, increasing security and stability, while building Iraqi capacity to reassume responsibility.²⁰ By 2012, the government of Iraq assumed control of the country; and most U.S. forces redeployed, thus ending OIF. From invasion to withdrawal, OIF took nine years and significant resources to achieve an acceptable end-state.

The price of security and stability in Iraq came at a significant cost to the U.S. Over the nine years of OIF, U.S. forces in Iraq lost 4,409 service members fighting the

¹⁶ Amy Belasco, Troop Levels in the Afghan and Iraq Wars, FY2001-FY2012: Cost and Other Potential Issues (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, July 2, 2009), 8, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R40682.pdf>.

¹⁷ Amy Belasco, Troop Levels in the Afghan and Iraq Wars, FY2001-FY2012: Cost and Other Potential Issues (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, July 2, 2009), 9, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R40682.pdf>.

¹⁸ De-Ba'athification, U.S. process of removing elements of Saddam Hussein's ruling party from the new Iraq government.

¹⁹ Iver Gabrielsen, "Why Did Violence Decline During the US 'Surge' in Iraq?" *Small Wars Journal* (February 4, 2013), <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/why-did-violence-decline-during-the-us-Surge-in-iraq>.

²⁰ David M. Walker, Stabilizing and Rebuilding Iraq (Washington D.C.: General Accounting Office, October 4, 2007), 2, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/120/118014.pdf>.

Ba'athist regime and al-Qaeda of Iraq.²¹ In addition, over 31,925 U.S. service members returned wounded from deployments to Iraq.²² These numbers do not address the number of coalition forces nor the number of Iraqi security forces and civilians killed or wounded, estimated as high as 134,000.²³ The Congressional Budget Office reported over \$823 billion in Overseas Contingency Operations spending for OIF.²⁴ These costs include the direct costs of fighting the war in Iraq; however, they do not include the spending increases to the baseline DOD budget. The contingency operations cost of U.S. MCO-COIN operations in Iraq ended in December 2012; however, the long-term stability of the new democratic Iraq remains in question.

For nine years, the U.S. funded security and stability MCO-COIN operations in Iraq only to withdraw with long-term security and stability still in question. The success of the 2007-2008 surge and the establishment of a new Iraqi government eventually provided the U.S. with the opportunity to redeploy its forces. U.S. operations in support of OIF, however, required tremendous resources that strained the U.S. government's annual budgets throughout the war and will continue to do so for years to come. With continued sectarian violence and insurgent activities continuing after the U.S. withdrawal, the long-term U.S. MCO-COIN operations cost seems significantly greater

²¹ Hannah Fischer, U.S. Military Casualty Statistics: Operation New Dawn, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, February 5, 2013), 5, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22452.pdf>.

²² Hannah Fischer, U.S. Military Casualty Statistics: Operation New Dawn, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, February 5, 2013), 5, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22452.pdf>.

²³ Neta C. Crawford and Cathrine Lutz, The Costs of War Since 2001: Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan (Providence, RI: Watson Institute for International Studies Brown University, March 2013), 4, <http://costsofwar.org/sites/default/files/The%20Costs%20of%20War%20Since%202001%20Executive%20Summary%203.13.pdf>.

²⁴ Anthony H. Cordesman, "The U.S. Cost of the Afghan War: FY 2002-FY2013" (Center for Strategic & International Studies, May 14, 2012), 4, http://csis.org/files/publication/120515_US_Spending_Afghan_War_SIGAR.pdf.

than the security and stability within Iraq today. These results demonstrate the problematic characteristics of the outcomes of the OIF MCO-COIN mission.

The combined high costs of U.S. operations in OEF and OIF highlight the overall effectiveness and efficiency of MCO-COIN operations. Estimates of the overall cost for U.S. MCO-COIN operations over since 2001 run to nearly \$4 trillion.²⁵ While the U.S. rightfully targeted Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda after the 9/11 attacks, the decisions to engage in two MCO-COIN wars for over a decade required far more resources than initially estimated. The high cost and marginal effectiveness and efficiency of MCO-COIN operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan will loom as the U.S. pivots to the Asia-Pacific. If threats in the Asia-Pacific emerge that require COIN operations for mitigation, the U.S. will have to decide whether to opt for a potential long-term and expensive MCO-COIN, with uncertain outcome, or look to another option for answers to regional security and stability.

The first section of this chapter focused on MCO-COIN operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. The following focuses on security cooperation counterinsurgency (SC-COIN) as an alternative to MCO-COIN for combatting an insurgency. The ongoing U.S. SC-COIN operations in Colombia provide a case study with which to assess the overall effectiveness and efficiency of SC-COIN in comparison to MCO-COIN for handling long-term security and stability missions.

Since the 1960s, Colombia faced an insurgency that destabilized the nation and threatened to topple the government. Three main groups threatened the Colombian

²⁵ Neta C. Crawford and Cathrine Lutz, The Costs of War Since 2001: Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan (Providence, RI: Watson Institute for International Studies Brown University, March 2013), 2, <http://costsofwar.org/sites/default/files/The%20Costs%20of%20War%20Since%202001%20Executive%20Summary%203.13.pdf>.

government, the leftist Marxist-Leninist insurgent guerilla called the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia), drug-trafficking cartels, and right-wing paramilitary organizations. These organizations fought for power against the Colombian government and one another.

In 1999, the U.S. began an aid campaign designed to assist the Colombian government in conducting a counterinsurgency campaign. The campaign effort focused on three main areas, counternarcotics, counterterrorism, and COIN. The threat to U.S. national security included the spread of the leftist revolutionary influence of the FARC throughout Central and South America and the increase in drug trafficking to the U.S. In response, the U.S. provided aid in the form of SC-COIN, calling the effort Plan Colombia.

Between 2000 and 2007, the U.S. supported Colombia through a mix of targeted financial assistance and military advisor support. The combined civilian-military effort embraced a three-phase strategy of “Clear, Hold, and Consolidate.”²⁶ The scale of the operation included 2,000 U.S. personnel from a combination of U.S. agencies and a military presence capped at 800 personnel.²⁷ The State Department (DOS) coordinated the three focus areas of Plan Colombia with DOD providing capabilities for improving security and reducing illicit narcotics, the Justice Department (DOJ) promoting the rule of law and judicial reforms, and the U.S. Agency for International Development

²⁶ Jess Ford, PLAN COLOMBIA Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; U.S. Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance (Washington D.C.: General Accounting Office, October 2008), 13, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d0971.pdf>.

²⁷ Simon Romero, “Increased U.S. Military Presence in Colombia Could Pose Problems With Neighbors,” *The New York Times* (Caracas, Venezuela, July 22, 2009), http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/23/world/americas/23colombia.html?_r=0.

(USAID) promoting aid for internally displaced persons (IDPs).²⁸ The DOD provided military equipment to facilitate efforts to increase government access to remote areas controlled by the FARC and other paramilitary organizations as well as SC-COIN advisors to support Colombian operations. The DOJ provided counterdrug and anti-corruption support to the Colombian judicial system. Finally, USAID provided alternatives to the growing and cultivation of illicit drugs, in addition to the aid to IDPs.

Plan Colombia resulted in improved security and stability, failing only to achieve drug reduction and eradication goals. The financial assistance provided by the U.S. allowed the Colombian military and police services to increase in size from 279,000 to 415,000, directly enhancing Colombian security.²⁹ The improved security included the demilitarization of nearly 32,000 paramilitary members, the reduction of active FARC members from 17,000 to 8,000, a 15-percent reduction in homicides, and a 70-percent reduction in kidnappings.³⁰ These efforts contributed directly to stability objectives in Colombia, while doing so at an affordable expense.

The SC-COIN support to the Colombian government cost significantly less than MCO-COIN. From 2000-2007, the U.S. government appropriated \$6.1 billion for Plan Colombia.³¹ With U.S. forces in an advisory role, the risk of casualties diminished significantly in comparison to the MCO-COIN operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. The

²⁸ Jess Ford, PLAN COLOMBIA Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; U.S. Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance (Washington D.C.: General Accounting Office, October 2008), 2, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d0971.pdf>.

²⁹ Jess Ford, PLAN COLOMBIA Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; U.S. Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance (Washington D.C.: General Accounting Office, October 2008), 13, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d0971.pdf>.

³⁰ Jess Ford, PLAN COLOMBIA Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; U.S. Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance (Washington D.C.: General Accounting Office, October 2008), 17-44, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d0971.pdf>.

³¹ Jess Ford, PLAN COLOMBIA Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; U.S. Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance (Washington D.C.: General Accounting Office, October 2008), 28, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d0971.pdf>.

last U.S. service members to die in Colombia occurred in 2009, when a U.S. Navy helicopter crashed off the shore of Colombia killing three U.S. sailors.³² In 2003, three plane crashes killed five U.S. contractors supporting Plan Colombia and resulted in the capture by the FARC of three U.S. contractors.³³ At present, the DOD provides no further publicly releasable data on additional U.S. military casualties associated with Plan Colombia; however, all three captured contractors survived captivity and were rescued in 2008.³⁴ Despite the much smaller footprint in the number of U.S. forces and the dollars spent on SC-COIN efforts, the achievements in improving Colombian security and stability are impressive.

Colombia's "Clear, Hold, Consolidate" strategy proved efficient and effective in the overall improvement of Colombia's security environment. The positive trends of SC-COIN in Colombia look very favorable when compared to the costs of MCO-COIN efforts such as OEF and OIF.

Table 2. Counter-Insurgency Operations (COIN) Analysis

Counter <u>Insurgencies</u>	<u>Enemy Threat</u>	<u>Type of Conflict</u>	<u>Efficiency</u>				<u>Effectiveness</u>
			<u>Scale</u>	<u>Duration</u>	<u>Cost*</u>	<u>Casualties</u>	
Afghanistan	Unconventional (Insurgency)	MCO-COIN (Air-Land)	500,000+**	12+ years	\$527 Billion	1,741 KIA 18,564 WIA	Undetermined Unstable
Iraq	Conventional & Unconventional (Army/Insurgency)	MCO-COIN (Air-Land)	1,500,000**	9 years	\$776 Billion	3,518 KIA 32,222 WIA	Undetermined Unstable
Colombia	Unconventional (Insurgency)	Security Cooperation (Military Advisors)	9,600***	12 years	\$6 Billion	8 KIA WIA****	Yes Stable

Sources: Department of Defense, Defense Casualty Analysis System, (Washington D.C.: 2013), <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/dc/as>.
Stephen Daggett, *Costs of Major U.S. Wars* (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, June 29, 2010).

Note: * All cost converted to 2011 constant dollars
** 2,000,000+ is the combined number of U.S. service members deployed to support operations in Afghanistan and Iraq
*** 9,600 represents the 12 year maximum with a 800 military personnel cap mandate by Congress
**** unreported number of WIA

³²Associated Press, "Navy Chopper Crashes Near Colombia," *USA Today*, December 13, 2005, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/2005-12-13-navy-helicopter_x.htm.

³³Nicole Elana Karsin, "Escalating U.S. Casualties in Colombia," *Colombia Journal* (April 14, 2003), <http://colombiajournal.org/escalating-u-s-casualties-in-colombia.htm>.

³⁴Kevin Whitelaw, "A Dramatic Hostage Rescue in Colombia," *U.S. News* (Bogota, Colombia, July 2, 2008), <http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2008/07/02/a-dramatic-hostage-rescue-in-colombia>.

This chapter has analyzed several critical aspects of three COIN conflicts, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Colombia. Table 2 provides the consolidated data.

When examining these three COIN conflicts, several compelling considerations emerge. First, the U.S. faced an insurgency in all three conflicts; however, in both Afghanistan and Iraq, the U.S. countered with MCO-COIN, while in Colombia the U.S. countered with SC-COIN. Second, the U.S. mobilized millions of U.S. service members to execute the MCO-COIN operations. In contrast, less than 10,000 mobilized to support the SC operations in Colombia. Third, the duration of COIN, whether MCO or SC, can last for years, creating the possibility for burgeoning costs. Fourth, the cost in treasure and blood was pennies on the dollar for the SC-COIN operation in comparison to the MCO-COIN operations. Finally, in this case study MCO-COIN provides a less certain long-term security and stability outcome than SC-COIN. If conditions permit, executing SC-COIN increases the potential for long-term security and stability and costs significantly less than executing MCO-COIN. If conditions require MCO-COIN then U.S. strategists should understand the costs could be exponentially higher. SC-COIN also provides for more manageable and acceptable outcomes, while MCO-COIN operation outcomes are less certain. While the context of each conflict analyzed in this chapter is different, this chapter provides the background for considerations in managing potential COIN conflicts in the Asia-Pacific.

Looking to Asia, the above considerations are pertinent as factors for ensuring long-term security and stability within the region. The U.S. must consider the differences in resource commitments and cost when executing MCO-COIN versus SC-COIN. A failure to develop a robust SC-COIN capability in the Asia-Pacific increases the risk a

future need to conduct a costly and potentially inefficient and ineffective MCO-COIN response to an indirect threat against U.S. interests in the region. The next chapter offers two key elements for a balanced military strategy to support the U.S. pivot toward Asia.

CHAPTER 5

A BALANCED APPROACH TO THE PIVOT

As the U.S. shifts from twenty years in the Middle East to a new focus on the Pacific, the correct balance is critical to ensuring access to emerging markets and to achieving long-term regional stability while protecting U.S. national security interests throughout the region. This chapter examines how the DOD can achieve the balance required for securing U.S. interests as it pivots toward the Pacific Theater.

This chapter begins by examining the relationship between the direct threats defined in chapter Two and the major combat operations (MCO) examined in Chapter Three, as they relate to the U.S. pivot toward Asia. It examines the relationship between the indirect threats studied in Chapter Two and the counterinsurgencies (COIN) examined in Chapter Four as they relate to the pivot. The variables considered in the examination of both the direct and indirect threats include, the enemy threat; the MCO or COIN response; the efficiency of the operation consisting of the scale, duration, cost, and casualties, and the overall effectiveness of the U.S. operation. In this chapter, these variables draw on the data collected in the previous case studies to reach conclusions with regard to the potential threats facing the U.S. in Asia over the next decade.

This next chapter offers the combination of Joint-AirSea Operations (J-ASO) and Security Cooperation (SC) as the key elements of a balanced defense strategy that responds to both the direct and indirect threats facing the U.S. in the Pacific. This examination illustrates why both elements are required for a balanced, efficient, and effective effort to secure U.S. regional interests. Finally, this chapter puts into analytical context the potential risks of an imbalance in the DOD approach to the pivot.

With the shift of emerging economies from west to east, the U.S. pivot toward Asia comes with the potential for significant economic gains. However, along with the potential for economic gain, the pivot also comes with a different set of threats than the U.S. has faced over the past twenty years. At the core lies the economic competition between the two largest world economies, those of the U.S. and China. Both nations seek to exploit of the Asia-Pacific economic boom and both nations look to protect their interests throughout the region, thereby creating security tensions in the region. The U.S. seeks to protect access to the global commons and markets in the Asia-Pacific, while China seeks to protect its interests against potential adversaries.

In April 2013, China's Information Office of State Council published a white paper titled, "The Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces," which outlined the mission of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). This was similar to the DOD release of the document, "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense." The preface of the former described a growing China focused on promoting peace and development, while opposing hegemony and power politics.¹ The document also discussed the development of a strong national defense and a military force capable of meeting its security and development needs.²

The document then outlined the situation, challenges, and missions for China. The situation identified the Asia-Pacific as being significant for its economic

¹ "The Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces" (Information Office of the State Council, The People's Republic of China, April 16, 2013), http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-04/16/c_132312681.htm.

² "The Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces" (Information Office of the State Council, The People's Republic of China, April 16, 2013), http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-04/16/c_132312681.htm.

development and the critical region of strategic interaction between the US and China.³

The white paper identified the Taiwan separatists, the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands dispute with Japan, and the U.S. pivot as challenges causing the region to become “tenser.”⁴ The document articulated the safeguarding of China’s national unification, its territorial integrity, and its development interests as the three critical tasks for Chinese military force. Based on the assessment of the situation and challenges China faces in Asia, the document outlined four missions for the PLA, “winning local wars, conducting military operations other than war, deepening security cooperation, and fulfilling international obligations.”⁵

To meet the missions outlined in this white paper, the PLA continues a modernization and development effort to project military power beyond China’s borders across the Asia-Pacific. The modernization and development enterprise includes long-range anti-ship missiles; long-range surface-to-air missiles; and a modern naval force with submarines, aircraft carriers, and stealth aircraft.⁶ This modernization plan envisions the development of a fifth generation Air Force, a blue water navy, and anti-access/area denial (A2AD) capabilities for greater power projection and territorial defense. The A2AD strategy targets air, land, and sea operations within a defended

³ “The Diversified Employment of China’s Armed Forces” (Information Office of the State Council, The People’s Republic of China, April 16, 2013), http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-04/16/c_132312681.htm.

⁴ “The Diversified Employment of China’s Armed Forces” (Information Office of the State Council, The People’s Republic of China, April 16, 2013), http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-04/16/c_132312681.htm.

⁵ “The Diversified Employment of China’s Armed Forces” (Information Office of the State Council, The People’s Republic of China, April 16, 2013), http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-04/16/c_132312681.htm.

⁶ Ronald O’Rourke, China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, April 26, 2013), 9-42, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33153.pdf>.

region.⁷ The anti-access component of an A2AD strategy aims to prevent access into a defended region, while the area denial component aims to deny freedom of maneuver and action within a defended region.⁸

China's territorial claims in the South China Sea (SCS) provide a strategic framework for understanding China's A2AD capabilities development. Figure 1 illustrates the "Nine-Dashed Line" (or "First Island Chain" line) representing China's territorial claims in the East and South China Seas as well as the "Second Island Chain" line representing China's expanding influence into and beyond the Philippine Sea.⁹ These lines of influence underscore China's interest in power projection.

The first line encompasses nearly all of the SCS and overlaps with conflicting territorial and resource claims with Vietnam, The Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei.¹⁰ China claims interests on several island chains, the Parcels Islands, the Spratly Islands, and the Scarborough Shoal, as well as potential oil reserves in the SCS. This area also represents a major sea-line-of-communication (SLOC) for international commerce and access to ports in several of the largest emerging economies in the world. Matching these claims with China's emerging major-power armed forces make it easy to see the potential threat to U.S. economic interests in the rapidly emerging economic markets of the Asia-Pacific Region.

⁷ Andrew Krepinevich, Barry Watts, and Robert Work, Meeting the Anti-Access and Area-Denial Challenge (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2003), ii, www.csbaonline.org/.../2003.05.20-Anti-Access-Area-Denial-A2-AD.pdf.

⁸ Andrew Krepinevich, Barry Watts, and Robert Work, Meeting the Anti-Access and Area-Denial Challenge (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2003), ii, www.csbaonline.org/.../2003.05.20-Anti-Access-Area-Denial-A2-AD.pdf.

⁹ T.X. Hammes, Offshore Control: A Proposed Strategy for an Unlikely Conflict (Washington D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, June 2012), 2, <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/docuploaded/SF%2020278%20Hammes.pdf>.

¹⁰ Rodger Baker and Zhixing Zhang, The Paradox of China's Naval Strategy (Washington D.C.: STRATFOR Global Intelligence, July 17, 2012), <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/paradox-chinas-naval-strategy>.



Figure 1. China's Anti-Access/Area Denial Island Chain Lines of Influence

Source: T.X. Hammes, *Offshore Control: A Proposed Strategy for an Unlikely Conflict* (Washington D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, June 2012), 2, <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/docuploaded/SF%202078%20Hammes.pdf>.

In particular, the development of China's A2AD military capabilities poses a potential threat to continued U.S. access to the Asia-Pacific. China's development of A2AD technologies creates a potential barrier to Asian economic markets by denying the freedom of movement within certain regions of the Asia-Pacific. As the U.S. and China both look to maintain access to these markets, protect the SLOCs in and out, and secure future resources, the combination of territorial disputes, economic markets, and trade routes in the SCS and Asia-Pacific increases the potential for escalation and conflict.

The pivot toward Asia requires the DOD address China's A2AD military capabilities and the direct, conventional threat they represent. This combination of the A2AD threat and of the maritime and littoral geography in the Asia-Pacific indicates a greater potential for an air-sea MCO conflict than for an air-land MCO conflict. The reader should recall that the U.S. last fought a conventional air-sea MCO conflict in the Pacific during World War II. The pivot may require the U.S. to engage in its first joint air-sea MCO conflict since World War II and since the enactment of the Goldwater-Nichols Act. In order to protect U.S. interests in the Asia-Pacific region should a conflict arise, the U.S. must develop an MCO operational concept to counter the A2AD threat.

In November 2011, the DOD announced the opening of a joint office to further develop an operational concept to counter A2AD capabilities.¹¹ The MCO operational concept to counter A2AD is AirSea Battle, referred to as Joint AirSea Operations (J-ASO) in this paper. J-ASO supports military power projection against A2AD threats to ensure continued access throughout the global commons and freedom of maneuver within an A2AD defended area. In addition, the J-ASO concept attempts to provide the efficient and effective operational capabilities required for protecting U.S. interests against the emerging direct threat in the Asia-Pacific.¹²

The efficiency and effectiveness of past MCO conflicts offer insights for any future U.S. MCO conflict in the Asia-Pacific and help to inform the development of J-ASO as the MCO response to the A2AD threat in Asia. With regard to efficiency, the

¹¹ Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), Multi-Service Office to Advance Air-Sea Battle Concept (Washington D.C.: Department of Defense, November 9, 2011), <http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=14910>.

¹² Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), Multi-Service Office to Advance Air-Sea Battle Concept (Washington D.C.: Department of Defense, November 9, 2011), <http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=14910>.

scale, duration, cost, and casualties of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam indicate the potential for similarly high levels of commitment in any future Asia-Pacific MCO conflict, perhaps resulting in thousands of casualties.

However, the 1991 Gulf War provides a different perspective on the potential efficiency of a future MCO-conflict in the Asia-Pacific. The efficiencies achieved in the MCO air-land campaign of the 1991 Gulf War, short duration, comparatively low cost, and minimal casualties provide interesting considerations for the development of J-ASO. The 1991 Gulf War demonstrated how properly integrated, trained, and equipped air and land forces engaged in an MCO conflict could achieve limited operational objectives in an extremely short period of time at minimal cost in blood and treasure. In order to achieve the same level of efficiency as the air-land MCO campaign of the 1991 Gulf War, the air and maritime components for J-ASO must develop the same level of operational cooperation, coordination, and integration that existed between the air and land components.

As for the potential effectiveness of J-ASO in an Asia-Pacific MCO conflict, both World War II and the 1991 Gulf War provide additional insights. In World War II, the island-hopping and maritime operations against the Japanese A2AD defenses proved successful in rolling back the Japanese and set the conditions for the military invasion of Japan. The result of this MCO campaign created the conditions for long-term security, prosperity, and stability in the Asia-Pacific and the protection of U.S. interests in the region. The limited political objective of the 1991 Gulf War allowed the U.S. military to develop a narrowly focused campaign plan focused on liberating Kuwait from Iraqi occupation. The previously discussed efficiencies of the air-land operations, combined

with the limited political objective, set the conditions for rapid success. The result of the conflict deescalated the regional crisis caused by Iraq's invasion improving regional security and stability.

Looking toward a potential MCO-conflict in Asia, the J-ASO concept must provide the operational capability of deterring or achieving limited military objectives against an adversary employing an A2AD strategy to improve regional security and stability while protecting U.S. interests. In addition to the direct threat, however, the potential for an indirect threat that threatens U.S. regional interests also exists throughout the Asia-Pacific.

The potential exists for an insurgency within a nation or region of the Asia-Pacific to destabilize the area, denying and/or disrupting U.S. access, or undermining U.S. interests in the region. The employment of an insurgency as a means to achieve the political objective of undermining U.S. regional interests represents a credible indirect threat to the U.S. in the Asia-Pacific. Even an insurgency for other political and territorial objectives could deny and/or disrupt U.S. access in the region and negatively affect its interests.

Throughout the twentieth century, many Asia-Pacific nations have seen a history of insurgency and counterinsurgency (COIN) conflicts for control of national power. The Philippines have been engaged in multiple insurgencies, first an insurgency against U.S. rule, then a communist insurgency, and currently both an ethno-nationalist insurgency and an Islamic militant insurgency.¹³ China fought a multi-decade long civil war with Mao Zedong leading a communist insurgency to overthrow the nationalist government.

¹³ Mike Fowler, "Philippine Counterinsurgency Strategy: Then and Now," *Small Wars Journal* (January 18, 2011), 1-9, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/journal/docs-temp/651-fowler.pdf>.

The British faced a twelve-year communist insurgency on the Malayan Peninsula.¹⁴ The French followed by the U.S. fought against Ho Chi Minh's communist insurgency in French Indochina and Vietnam leading to the independence of Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam.¹⁵ Thailand fought a communist insurgency followed by an Islamic insurgency.¹⁶ In Indonesia, a separatist insurgency spanned 30-years.¹⁷

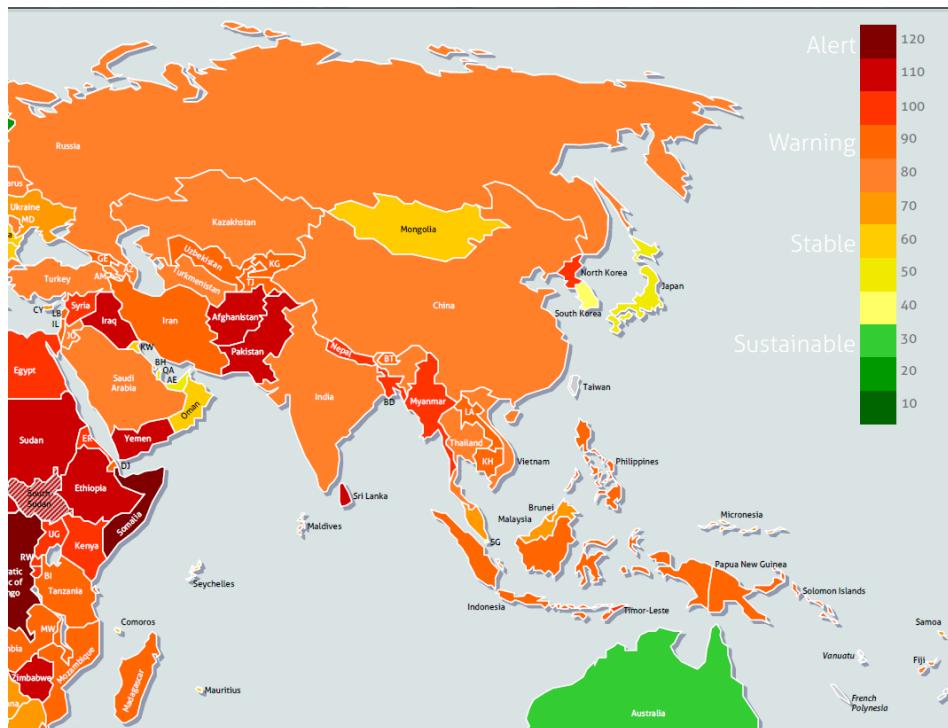


Figure 2. 2012 Failed State Index

Source: *Nate Haken et al., Failed States Index 2012 (Washington D.C.: The Fund for Peace, 2012)*, <http://www.fundforpeace.org/global/library/cfsir1210-failedstatesindex2012-06p.pdf>.

¹⁴ Jay Gordon Simpson, "Not by Bombs Alone Lessons from Malaya," *Joint Force Quarterly* (Summer 1999), 91- 99, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/jfq/1622.pdf>.

¹⁵ Michael O'Hanlon, America's History of Counterinsurgency (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institute, June 2009), 2, <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2009/06/counterinsurgency-ohanlon>.

¹⁶ Peter Chalk, The Malay-Muslim Insurgency in Southern Thailand Understanding the Conflict's Evolving Dynamic (Arlington, VA: RAND Corporation, 2008), 5-12, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2008/RAND_OP198.pdf.

¹⁷ Paul J. Tompkins Jr. Paul A. Jureidini, Casebook on Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: Volume I: 1933-1962 Revised Edition (Fort Bragg, NC: United States Special Operations Command, January 25, 2013), 55-78, <http://www.soc.mil/ARIS/CasebookV1S.pdf>.

In the twenty-first century, these nations now thrive economically; however, they still struggle with internal stability. Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines rank in the world's top 30 for gross domestic product.¹⁸ Cambodia and Laos are two of the fastest-growing economies in Asia.¹⁹ The 2012, Failed State Index, produced by the Fund for Peace and published by Foreign Policy, states all these countries exhibit warning or alert signs of instability.²⁰ This combination of economic opportunity and internal instability illustrates the potential risk to U.S. interests the indirect threat of an insurgency in the Asia-Pacific poses. In order to protect U.S. interests in the region against the development of an insurgency, the U.S. must develop a COIN approach to mitigate this indirect threat and complement its MCO capabilities.

In determining the most efficient and effective COIN approach to diminish potentially destabilizing influences by insurgent organizations in the Asia-Pacific, the insurgent conflict analysis from Chapter Four provides historical insights for consideration in the development of a strategy to mitigate the indirect insurgency threat. With regard to efficiency, the scale, duration, cost, and casualties of the MCO-COIN operations in Afghanistan and Iraq indicate the potential for similar high levels of commitment in any future Asia-Pacific MCO-COIN conflict.

However, the SC-COIN operation in Colombia provides a different, yet complementary, perspective on the potential efficiency of a future COIN conflict in the Asia-Pacific. First, the cost differential between the MCO-COIN operations supporting

¹⁸ CIA World Factbook 2013-14, (Washington D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, 2013), <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2001rank.html>.

¹⁹ Lucas Kawa, "The 20 Fastest Growing Economies In The World," *Business Insider* (October 24, 2012), <http://www.businessinsider.com/worlds-fastest-economies-2012-10?op=1>.

²⁰ Nate Haken et al., Failed States Index 2012 (Washington D.C.: The Fund for Peace, 2012), <http://www.fundforpeace.org/global/library/cfsir1210-failedstatesindex2012-06p.pdf>.

Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom and the SC-COIN indicate SC as a more efficient, cost-conscious strategy. Second, comparing the duration, scale of U.S. involvement, and casualties, all three variables indicate SC-COIN as the more efficient strategy. As such, SC-COIN offers a potentially more efficient approach for potential indirect threats in the Pacific than does MCO-COIN.

In addition, the effectiveness of SC-COIN can exceed that of MCO-COIN. The massive commitment of resources required to execute MCO, most recently in Afghanistan and Iraq, diminish the capacity of the DOD to respond to other vital interests. With the significantly lower commitment of resources required for SC-COIN, SC enables greater flexibility and the possibility of increased presence throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Finally, when comparing whether MCO-COIN or SC-COIN offers an efficient and effective approach for achieving long-term regional security and stability, SC proves the more efficacious approach for managing any potential indirect insurgent threat, as well as a hedge for direct threats that might lead to an MCO type conflict.

The military strategy for the U.S. pivot must address both the direct and indirect threats in the region. As this chapter illustrates, the combination of J-ASO and SC potentially provide the most efficient and effective approaches to mitigating the direct and indirect threats facing the U.S. pivot toward Asia. As this paper contends, J-ASO and SC provide the two critical elements for a balanced defense strategy that ensures long-term regional security and stability throughout the Asia-Pacific and protects U.S. regional interests. The author provides a visual depiction of this interactive, balanced approach in Figure 3 below.

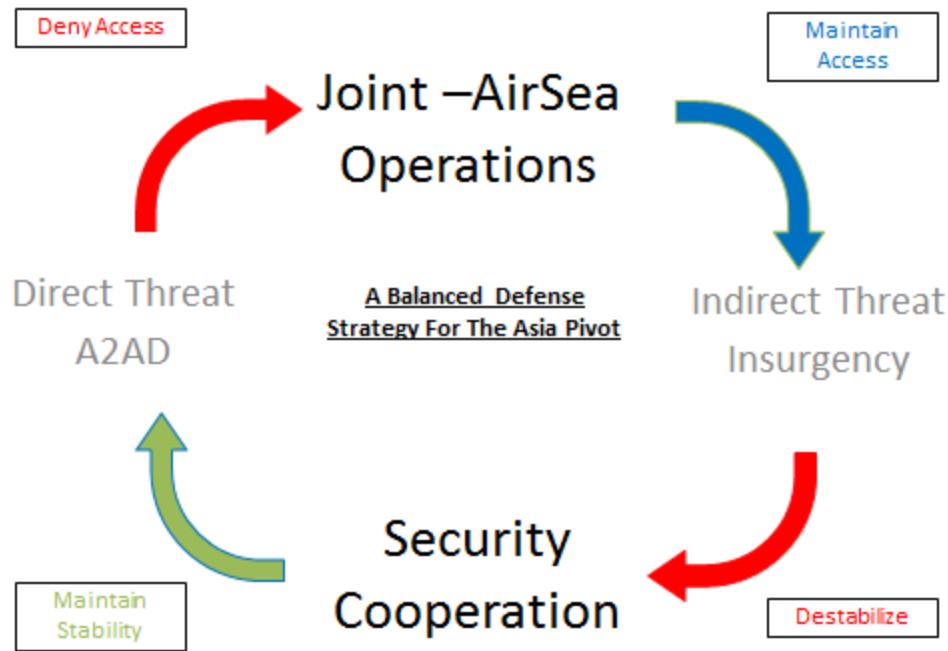


Figure 3.
Source: Author

Another way to examine this paper's central proposition is to use the five objectives developed by Dr Thomas X. Hammes, a Senior Research Fellow for the Center for Strategic Research at the National Defense University, which he contends any U.S. strategy for Asia must achieve. These objectives include:

- Access for U.S. forces and allied commercial interests
- Assurance to Asian nations that the U.S. is willing and able to remain engaged in Asia
- Deterrence of China from military action to resolve disputes
- Victory with minimal risk of nuclear escalation in the event of conflict

- Credibility in peacetime.”²¹

So, one asks, does the balanced approach offered in this paper meet the requirements of these five objectives? First, to achieve access against the A2AD direct threat, the discussion begins with the Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC), which outlines the critical capabilities required to achieve operational access against an A2AD strategy.²² As this research defines the construct, J-ASO “nests” under the JOAC and provides the operational concept for integrating Air Force and Navy capabilities. These abilities provide the “cross-domain synergistic effects” required to defeat the components of an A2AD threat.²³ These required capabilities project credible power across great distances with the potential to ensure access and secure vital U.S. interests. The development of J-ASO offers to provide the most efficient and effective approach to gaining and maintaining access and freedom of maneuver within an area denied by an A2AD direct threat.

To achieve access against the indirect insurgent threat, SC offers partner nations in the region the ability to maintain security against groups that threaten the use of violence as a destabilizing force. The three priorities of SC efforts are “to build relationships that promote U.S. interests, build allied and partnership capacities for self-defense, and promote peacetime and contingency access for U.S. forces.”²⁴ The implementation of a robust SC plan for the Asia-Pacific would provide the most efficient

²¹T.X. Hammes, Offshore Control: A Proposed Strategy for an Unlikely Conflict (Washington D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, June 2012), 3, <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/docuploaded/SF%20278%20Hammes.pdf>.

²²“JOINT OPERATIONAL ACCESS CONCEPT (JOAC)” (Department of Defense, January 17, 2012), http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/JOAC_Jan%202012_Signed.pdf.

²³“JOINT OPERATIONAL ACCESS CONCEPT (JOAC)” (Department of Defense, January 17, 2012), 4, http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/JOAC_Jan%202012_Signed.pdf.

²⁴“Defense Security Cooperation Agency Strategic Plan 2009-2014” (Department of Defense, September 29, 2009), http://www.dsca.mil/programs/CPO/DSCA_StratPlan_2009-2014.pdf.

and effective approach to gaining and maintaining access to areas threatened by an indirect insurgent threat.

To achieve assurance, Hammes's next objective, the effective development of the J-ASO operational concept must effectively demonstrate the ability to achieve limited operational objectives against an A2AD threat. To achieve assurance, the U.S. must implement a comprehensive regional SC plan that will demonstrate to Asian nations U.S. resolve to remain engaged in Asia. By developing a robust SC programs in at-risk nations, the US can build trust, reduce the risk of instability, and ensure continued access. While the U.S. assures partners of its willingness to conduct combat operations as required, the U.S. must develop its partnerships with a credible and robust SC effort that partners and potential adversaries see day-to-day.

To achieve the third objective, deterrence, the development of J-ASO must effectively demonstrate the ability to achieve limited operational objectives against an A2AD threat. To achieve deterrence against the indirect insurgent threat, the U.S. must demonstrate the credibility and capability of its SC engagements to build partnership capacity of host-nation forces and support their efforts to maintain security and stability. In addition, the U.S. must retain the ability to complement J-ASO and SC with COIN capabilities when deterrence fails and partner capacity needs additional assistance.

To meet the requirements of Hammes' fourth objective, to achieve victory, both the implementation and execution of J-ASO and SC in the Asia-Pacific Theater must develop capabilities and objectives that can deescalate flare-ups in regional tensions. If a crisis requires military intervention, plans must include off-ramps to reestablish regional stability and prevent uncontrolled escalation. The SC capabilities discussed in this paper

provide such off-ramps to deescalate crises. As envisioned in this discussion, strong and balanced J-ASO and SC abilities complement each other and provide not just victory in the sense of winning a military operation/campaign; rather, a more holistic concept ensuring a better future for the U.S. and its allies and partners.

Finally, to achieve credibility in peacetime, the U.S. must develop and exercise the J-ASO operational concept and implement SC initiatives across the Asia-Pacific, balancing both approaches against the efficient and effective mitigation of both the direct and indirect threats in the region. The U.S. best meets this criterion using a whole of government approach with J-ASO and SC as its balanced approach to using the military instrument of power.

While J-ASO and SC provide the two key elements of a balanced defense strategy, by developing one without the other, the US risks losing access and destabilizing the region. If the U.S. fails to develop an efficient and effective J-ASO operational concept, then the direct A2AD threat adversary may develop an asymmetric counter to U.S. conventional deterrence and diminish U.S. credibility with Asian nations in the region. For example, military capabilities that negate U.S. power projection abilities to operate in international waters or from partner nations would reduce U.S. deterrence, credibility, and assurance. Similarly, an adversary employing effective diplomatic and economic coercion could force the U.S. out of an alliance or partnership relationship.

Likewise, if the U.S. fails to implement a robust SC plan then the indirect insurgent threat could expand. The destabilizing effects of an insurgency undermine U.S. assurances with the nation under insurgent attack, as well as other partner nations in the

region. In order to achieve victory and restore assurance, the U.S. could find itself in a position requiring it to commit significantly more resources in a MCO-COIN response. Such efforts proved a slippery slope for the U.S. in past campaigns, incurring high costs and yielding low or little effectiveness.

This chapter offered a glimpse of the future as the U.S. pivots toward the Asia-Pacific Region. Using the criteria developed for this project, supplemented by the ideas of Hammes, the examination provided a plausible analysis of the future if the U.S. adopts a security strategy that balances the best of Joint-AirSea Operations and Security Cooperation concepts. The next chapter concludes this project and offers several insights for the reader's consideration.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

An [adversary] may be likened to water, for just as flowing water avoids the heights and hastens to the lowlands, so an [adversary] avoids strength and strikes weakness. Thus, one able to gain victory in accordance with the enemy situation may be said to be divine.

— Sun Tzu

The announcement of the U.S. strategic rebalancing toward Asia from the Middle East creates the potential for significant miscalculation. The relative low-intensity, low-tech threats associated with the insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq now shift to high-tech, high-intensity threats in Asia. As the U.S. pivots from the Middle East to Asia, the transition requires significant attention from the DOD regarding the development of a defense strategy to support this rebalancing. Faced with a new operational environment and a different array of threats than those of the past decade, the DOD must develop a defense strategy capable of maintaining long-term security and stability in the Asia-Pacific while protecting U.S. interests in the region. This transition, compounded by the impact of sequestration and the national debt crisis, makes developing an efficient and effective defense strategy a massive undertaking and critical to maintaining U.S. strategic advantage. This study examined this challenge and it contributes to the current debate on the U.S. strategy for Asia.

This study began by asking this question, what military missions are required in order to provide a balanced defense posture for the pivot toward Asia?

In examining the strategic context of the pivot toward Asia and to inform the development of the U.S. defense strategy for the pivot, this study concluded the global economic shift to Asia, the post-war reduction in U.S. defense, the U.S. national debt,

and the potential direct and indirect threats within the region, as critical influencing elements. To inform the development of an efficient and effective balanced defense strategy, this analysis focused on the direct and indirect threats in the Asia-Pacific. To accomplish this task, this project examined past U.S. conflicts deriving historical lessons relevant to the development of the U.S. defense strategy that accompanies the pivot.

After an extensive examination of relevant materials pertinent to answering the question, this research paper offered the following thesis statement: a future defense strategy must combine Joint AirSea Operations (J-ASO) and Security Cooperation (SC) to provide a balanced approach for protecting U.S. national security interests in Asia.

While J-ASO and SC appear vastly different, when linked, they provide the two required complementary elements for developing a balanced defense strategy for the Asia-Pacific. This link created the need for a framework that incorporated two case studies. Each case study used a historical comparative analysis for the methodology. Both case studies examined the same six variables – the type of conflict, the enemy threat, the efficiency, and effectiveness of the U.S. military operation. To develop an efficient and effective balanced defense strategy, this study focused on the direct and indirect threats in the Asia-Pacific. To accomplish this task, this effort examined past U.S. conflicts deriving historical lessons relevant to the development of the U.S. defense strategy that accompanies the pivot.

Chapter Two examined challenges to U.S. interests in Asia before identifying and categorizing two potential threats the U.S. faces in the Pacific pivot. Anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) defined the direct threat and the destabilizing effects of insurgency defined the indirect threat. Then, this paper examined the potential risks to U.S. interests

in the Pacific as defined by these direct and indirect threats. Finally, chapter Two provided the context for analyzing the two historical case studies.

Chapter Three examined U.S. MCO conflicts from the Pacific Theater in World War II to the 1991 Gulf War. This comparative analysis focused on the overall efficiency and effectiveness of these conflicts. An analytical framework developed illustrating patterns in the data that permitted the synthesis for developing J-ASO to counter the A2AD direct threat. Chapter Three identified potential gaps in U.S. capabilities potentially impacting the transition to the Pacific.

Chapter Four provided the second case study assessment examining the costs of SC-COIN and MCO-COIN through a comparative analysis. The findings were that an efficient and effective SC initiative can improve longer-term U.S. regional interests. This chapter's analysis also contributed to the concept of managing security and stability challenges in Asia.

Chapter Five offered the combination of J-ASO and SC as the two key elements critical for a balanced defense strategy capable of supporting the U.S. pivot toward the Pacific. It explained why both the development of J-ASO and increasing SC operations provided the proper balance for effectively mitigating potential threats to U.S. interests in the Pacific. The assessment also discussed the pitfalls of developing an imbalanced strategy, developing J-ASO without increasing SC and increasing SC without developing J-ASO.

These chapters provided a thorough evaluation of the research question and, through a series of conclusions derived from the research, validated the research thesis proposed. In examining the strategic context of the pivot toward Asia and inform the

development of a U.S. defense strategy for the pivot, Chapter Two offered the following conclusion. The study found that the global economic shift to Asia, the post-war reduction in U.S. defense, the U.S. national debt, and the potential direct and indirect threats within the region, are all critical influencing elements.

The first case study focused on deriving lessons from past MCO conflicts in order to link them to the current A2AD direct threat in Asia and inform the development the defense strategy for supporting the U.S pivot toward Asia. The conclusions of this case study identified the potential long duration, high cost, and unpredictable results of MCO conflicts; the improvements of post Goldwater-Nichols MCO joint integration on the duration, cost, and results; and the lack of air and maritime component integration precipitated by the air-land-centric MCO conflicts over the past 70 years as critical lessons for consideration.

The second case study derived lessons from past COIN conflicts in order to link them to the potential indirect insurgency threat in Asia. The conclusions from this study inform the development the defense strategy for supporting the U.S pivot toward Asia. First, this case study identified MCO-COIN as more resource intensive and cost prohibitive than SC-COIN. Second, the analysis determined MCO-COIN provides less certain long-term security and stability outcomes than SC-COIN. Both these conclusions are critical for consideration in the development of an Asia-Pacific defense strategy.

The conclusions from the two case studies, when combined with the direct A2AD and indirect insurgency threat considerations challenging U.S. interests in Asia led to developments of a framework for their collective assessment. The lessons derived from the two case studies resulted in the framework to validate the assertion that long-term

regional security and stability requires the U.S. to develop a defense strategy for Asia that balances the defense against both the direct and indirect threats. In order to respond efficiently and effectively to the A2AD threat posed in Asia, the MCO case study identified the requirement for the DOD to develop an integrated air and maritime operational concept. Further, in order to respond efficiently and effectively to the potential threat of insurgency in Asia, the COIN case study identified the requirement for the DOD to develop a robust SC plan for nations in the Asia-Pacific.

The conclusions in chapter Five complete the process of answering this study's research question and validate its thesis. This portion of the study produced the outlined five findings below. First, by developing J-ASO, the DOD advances the integration of the air and maritime components similarly to the post-Vietnam integration of the air and land components. J-ASO provides the operational concept capable of gaining and maintaining access and freedom of maneuver in an A2AD contested region. Second, by increasing SC programs, the DOD builds the capacity of at-risk nations to improve their own security and stability from potential threats. Third, the balance between developing J-ASO and increasing SC programs to support the pivot is critical. Fourth, by developing J-ASO without SC, the DOD risks the destabilizing effects of an insurgency impacting U.S. regional interests; and by developing SC without J-ASO, the DOD risks losing access to U.S. interests in the region. Finally, the combination of these two elements provides the core for any balanced defense strategy in Asia. What follows are two implications for consideration.

This study has two implications for DOD strategists to consider as they plan for the pivot toward Asia. First, through the development of Joint-Air Sea Operations that

integrate air and sea operations in the same manner AirLand Battle integrated air and land operations after the Vietnam War can eliminate a major gap in operational capabilities.

Through the development and enhancement of security cooperation relationships with nations throughout the region, the DOD can increase stability, thus securing strategic interests. Instituting both J-ASO and SC is critical here. By only developing one without the other, the pivot toward Asia will become imbalanced, increasing the risk for instability and escalation. This potential instability threatens U.S. national interests in the region and creates the potential for exponential increases in cost to maintain it. To minimize the potential for repeating the high costs and instability of the last ten years, the DOD must consider managing challenges in Asia by making efforts that inhibit escalation, thereby diminishing cost.

Second, if nations perceive an inability of the US to defend against the A2AD threat the balance-of-power relationships in the region may shift, challenging US access to emerging markets. However, by deterring the direct threat, the indirect threat gives an adversary another option. By identifying potential at-risk nations and employing SC-COIN programs to aid them, the US can improve regional stability. If the US fails to invest in these activities, access to markets may become diminished. The by-product will cause a loss of economic opportunity and the cost to stabilize the developing regional instability will rise exponentially. The cost of engaging earlier with a stable government provides a more efficient and effective means for maintaining long-term regional security and stability than the unpredictable outcome of intervening with another long and costly regional war.

In summary, the U.S. enters the pivot toward Asia with twenty years of focus on the Middle East, limited experience with maritime combat operations since World War II, and a diminishing defense budget, all influencing the development of a viable defense strategy for the region. This transition requires DOD to examine its current capabilities and identify gaps that present and emerging challenges in the Pacific may threaten. By developing J-ASO and SC as the two key elements of a defense strategy for Asia, the U.S. can achieve a balanced and efficacious means of mitigating the threats challenging U.S. interests throughout the Asia-Pacific Region.

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